

Exhibit 2



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VIA COURIER

October 6, 2023

J. Greg Parks, Clerk of the Court
Alexandria Circuit, Court Civil Division
520 King Street
Room 307
Alexandria, VA 22314

FILED
CLERK OF COURTS
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
2023 OCT -6 PM 3:05
J. GREG PARKS, CLERK
BY
DEPUTY CLERK

Re: Richard Grenell v. Olivia Troye
Case No. CL22001907

Dear Mr. Parks:

On behalf of Defendant, Olivia Troye, in the above-referenced matter, I have enclosed for filing Defendant's Plea in Bar, Proposed Order, and Defendant's Witness and Exhibit List.

Please date-stamp the extra copies enclosed and return it to me in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone at (703) 590-1234 or by email at tcraig@fluet.law.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Craig, Esq.

Encl.

Defendant's Plea in Bar	(original + copy)
Proposed Order	(original + copy)
Defendant's Witness and Exhibit List	(original + copy)

cc.

Jesse Binnall, Esq. (via USPS, fax, and electronic mail)
Jason Greaves, Esq. (via USPS, fax, and electronic mail)

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

RICHARD GRENELL

Plaintiff,

v.

OLIVIA TROYE

Defendant.

CASE NO.: CL 22-001907

BY
DEPUTY CLERK

J. GREG PARKS, CLERK

2023 OCT -6 PM 3:05

FILED
CLERK OF COURTS
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

**DEFENDANT OLIVIA TROYE'S PLEA IN BAR TO
THE PLAINTIFF'S COMPLAINT FOR DEFAMATION**

COMES NOW, Defendant Olivia Troye, by and through counsel, to file her Plea in Bar seeking the dismissal with prejudice of the Plaintiff's Complaint for Defamation and Defamation *per se*. As grounds, the Defendant states as follows:

This case was filed by a former cabinet-level official and Ambassador in response to perceived criticism of how the former cabinet official conducted himself in public office. The supposedly defamatory statement at issue was a single tweet made by a former federal government employee in response to queries by two sitting Congressmen, made in the context of a lengthy exchange of criticisms between, among and about how various public officials, including Plaintiff, performed their public duties. This public discussion of the performance of public officials is at the heart of the type of speech protected by Virginia law, mandating dismissal of this action at this stage.

I. APPLICABLE LEGAL STANDARDS

In Virginia, “a plea in bar ‘alleges a single state of facts or circumstances (usually not disclosed or disclosed only in part by the record) which, *if proven*, constitutes an absolute defense to the claim.’” *Nelms v. Nelms*, 236 Va. 281, 289, (1988) (emphasis added). *See also, Our Lady of Peace, Inc. v. Morgan*, 297 Va. 832, 857 (2019). Defendant seeks an evidentiary hearing to prove her statements were substantially true and she had a reasonable basis for believing they were true, the statements are protected by Virginia’s immunity for statements of public concern, and the Plaintiff has admitted to experiencing no financial or reputational losses caused by the Defendant.

II. FACTUAL BACKGROUND

The Complaint and the record support the conclusion that the following facts are true:

1. The plaintiff, Richard Grenell, (“Grenell” or “Plaintiff”) and the Defendant, Olivia Troye (“Defendant” or “Troye”) both previously worked in the executive branch of the federal government.

2. Grenell served as the United States’ Ambassador to Germany from May 2018 – June 2020, and as Acting Director of National Intelligence (“Acting DNI”), a cabinet-level position, from February 2020 – May 2020. During some of that same period, Troye was a General Schedule (“GS”) federal employee assigned to work as a Special Advisor to Vice President Michael Pence.

3. Grenell’s service as Ambassador and Acting DNI was often marked by controversy particularly surrounding his public statements that were interpreted as expressing a desire to empower the European far right. *See* Ex. A, a group of press articles concerning Grenell.

4. Congressman Eric Swalwell, a current member of the House of Representatives, and others have criticized Grenell for, among other things, hosting members of *Alternative für Deutschland* (“AfD” or in English, “Alternative for Germany”) at the American Embassy for an

event on July 4, 2018. The AfD is a far-right populist political party that has been categorized as a “suspicious entity” by Germany’s domestic intelligence service, the Office for the Protection of the Constitution, over concerns of increasing radicalization, especially within its youth organization, which has been designated as extremist.¹ In June 2023, one of its prominent members was criminally charged in Germany over his alleged use in a 2021 speech of a slogan used by the Nazis’ SA stormtroopers.²

5. Congressman Swalwell publicly criticized Grenell on June 2, 2020, in a tweet and specifically compared him to a specific Nazi propagandist:



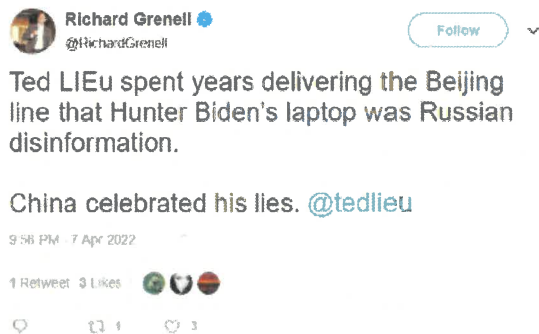
6. Congressman Swalwell repeated similar criticisms of Grenell on more than one occasion, including on July 22, 2020:

¹ See Ex. A, Guardian, “German court rules far-right AfD party a suspected threat to democracy,” March 8, 2022, at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/mar/08/german-court-rules-far-right-afd-party-a-suspected-threat-to-democracy>.

² See Ex. A, PBS Newshour, “Prominent figure in German far-right party charged over alleged Nazi slogan,” June 5, 2023, at https://www.pbs.org/newshour/world/prominent-figure-in-german-far-right-party-charged-over-alleged-nazi-slogan?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=news_tab.



7. The below exchange on Twitter (now “X”) at issue here, which occurred in April 2022, is reproduced below in chronological order:



8. Troye's sole statement at issue in this case was made in response to statements and questions from two sitting Members of Congress (Ted Lieu is a Congressman from California), concerning the performance of Grenell's official public duties representing the United States while he was serving as Ambassador to Germany.

9. As recently as May 18, 2023, Swalwell has repeated his criticisms of Grenell and alleged ties to Neo-Nazis:



10. Congressman Swalwell’s public statements before and after Ms. Troye’s tweet have not resulted in litigation by Grenell.

11. Others commonly publicly accused Grenell of similar allegations of emboldening Neo-Nazis but have not been sued, such as Halie Soifer, the CEO of the Jewish Democratic Council of America.³

A. Under Virginia Law, Grenell is a Public Figure and Cannot Prove Ms. Troye Spoke with Actual Malice.

Defamation in Virginia requires “(1) publication of (2) an actionable statement with (3) the requisite intent.” *Tharpe v. Saunders*, 285 Va. 476, 480 (2013)(citations omitted). The statements at issue must be demonstrably false in order to be considered actionable. *Id.* at 481. Furthermore, the statements must be factual in nature to be actionable; by contrast, expressions of opinion are expressly protected by the First Amendment. *Chaves v. Johnson*, 230 Va. 112, 119, 335 S.E.2d 97 (1985).

The trial court has the “gatekeeping function” to determine as a matter of law “whether a statement is reasonably capable of defamatory meaning before allowing the matter to be presented to a finder of fact.” *Schaecher v. Bouffault*, 290 Va. 83, 94, (2015). While allegedly defamatory statements must be interpreted according to their “plain and natural meaning,” defamation can occur “by inference, implication, or insinuation.” *Carwile v. Richmond Newspapers*, 196 Va. 1, 7 (1954). “In determining whether the words and statements complained of in the instant case are reasonably capable of the meaning ascribed to them by innuendo, every fair inference that may be drawn from the pleadings must be resolved in the plaintiff’s favor. However, the meaning of the

³ See Ex. A, Jewish Voice, “Jewish Democratic Leader Smears Richard Grenell as Nazi Supporter — Then Blocks Critics,” December 23, 2020, at <https://thejewishvoice.com/2020/12/jewish-democratic-leader-smears-richard-grenell-as-nazi-supporter-then-blocks-critics/>.

alleged defamatory language cannot, by innuendo, be extended beyond its ordinary and common acceptance.” *Id.* at 8.

Virginia law incorporates the *New York Times v. Sullivan* “actual malice” standard for defamation cases involving public figures. *Jordan v. Kollmann*, 269 Va. 569, 577 (2005). Therefore, in Virginia, Plaintiff must show “the defendant realized that his statement was false or that he subjectively entertained serious doubt as to the truth of his statement.” *Id.* To satisfy this requirement, Grenell must show that Troye “in fact entertained serious doubts as to the truth” of her publication and “actually had a high degree of awareness of probable falsity.” *Id.* at 580. In order to do so, Grenell must prove that Troye acted with actual malice to overcome Virginia’s statutory immunity for speech about issues of public concern *and also* because Grenell is a public figure meet this burden by clear and convincing evidence.⁴ He can do neither.

As for what constitutes a matter of public concern, the U.S. Supreme Court stated in *Snyder v. Phelps*, 562 U.S. 443, 453 (2011) (citations omitted):

[s]peech deals with matters of public concern when it can “be fairly considered as relating to any matter of political, social, or other concern to the community,” or when it “is a subject of legitimate news interest; that is, a subject of general interest and of value and concern to the public.”

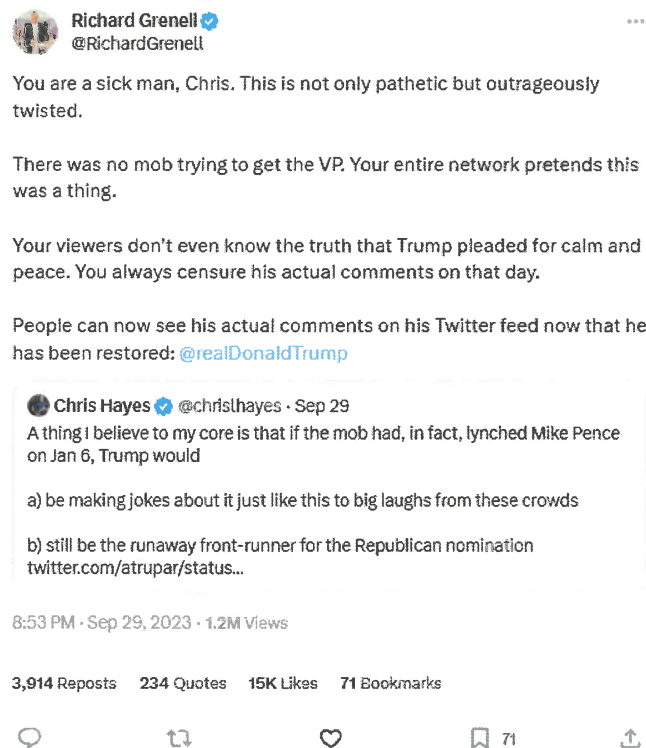
There can be little doubt that commenting upon actions allegedly taken by Grenell while he served as the U.S. Ambassador to Germany is speech that “deals with matters of public concern.” *See id.*

In *Fleming v. Moore*, 221 Va. 884, 891 (1981), the Virginia Supreme Court addressed who constitutes a public figure, stating:

⁴ Grenell should also be considered a “public official” because the circumstances surrounding the alleged defamation all pertain to a time frame when he served, as well as his actions, as U.S. Ambassador to Germany. Because public officials and public figures are subject to identical standards under Virginia law, it is irrelevant which category is actually applied. *Jordan*, 269 Va. at 576-577 (no difference between application of standard for public figure or public official).

For the most part those who attain this status (of public figure) have assumed roles of especial prominence in the affairs of society. Some occupy positions of such persuasive power and influence that they are deemed public figures for all purposes. More commonly, those classed as public figures have thrust themselves to the forefront of particular public controversies in order to influence the resolution of the issues involved. In either event, they invite attention and comment.

The Plaintiff is a former senior U.S. government official who continues to play a prominent role in politics and the public sphere. He is routinely quoted in the media, especially on topics such as challenging the validity of the 2020 election⁵ or the truth surrounding the events of January 6, 2021.⁶ Grenell frequently comments and personally criticizes journalists:



Further, he has over 1.2 million Twitter/X followers. *See <https://twitter.com/RichardGrenell>.*

⁵ Advocate, "Richard Grenell Flees Reporter Asking Evidence of Nevada Voter Fraud," November 5, 2020, at <https://www.advocate.com/election/2020/11/05/richard-grenell-flees-reporter-asking-evidence-nevada-voter-fraud>. Ex. A.

⁶ See X Post, dated September 29, 2023, available at <https://x.com/RichardGrenell/status/1707921582495310176?s=20>; last visited October 5, 2023.

The Virginia Supreme Court recently restated that “statements can be made that are offensive, unpleasant, harsh, and critical without necessarily constituting defamation.” *Bryant-Shannon v. Hampton Rds. Cmty. Action Program, Inc.*, 299 Va. 579, 588, 856 S.E.2d 575 (2021). For a statement to be actionable as defamation, a false statement must “carry the requisite ‘defamatory sting’ severe enough to subject the plaintiff ‘to contempt, shame, scorn or disgrace.’” *Id.* quoting *Schaecher v. Bouffault*, 290 Va. 83, 95 (2015). An actionable false statement must place the Plaintiff “into infamy.” *Bryant*, 299 Va. at 588. “[L]anguage that is insulting, offensive, or otherwise inappropriate, but constitutes no more than ‘rhetorical hyperbole’ is not defamatory.” *Yeagle v. Collegiate Times*, 255 Va. 293, 296, (1998).

The Supreme Court of Virginia has held that plaintiffs who seek to establish malice in a defamation case must do so by clear and convincing evidence. *See Great Coastal Express v. Ellington*, 230 Va. 142, 154, 334 S.E.2d 846 (1985) (overruled on other grounds). Common-law malice in Virginia may include “behavior actuated by motives of personal spite, or ill-will, independent of the occasion on which the communication was made.” *Gazette, Inc. v. Harris*, 229 Va. 1, 18, 325 S.E.2d 713 (1985). When a public official claims defamation, he must demonstrate the Defendant made the false statement knowing it was false, or proof of awareness of the high probability of falsity. *Jordan v. Kollmann*, at 580. In Virginia, clear and convincing evidence is a degree of proof which will produce a firm belief “as to the allegations sought to be established. Such a measure of proof is intermediate, more than a mere preponderance, but less than is required for proof beyond a reasonable doubt[.]” *Middleton v. Johnston*, 221 Va. 797, 803, (1981). Recently, while interpreting North Carolina law and the *New York Times* malice standard which are similar to Virginia law on this issue, the Fourth Circuit explained, “For defamation claim by public official, negligence is not enough; actual malice requires much more than failure to exercise

ordinary care, and failure to investigate before publishing, even when reasonably prudent person would have done so, is not sufficient to establish reckless disregard.” *Cannon v. Peck*, 36 F.4th 547 (4th Cir. 2022).

Ms. Troye’s undisputed testimony is that a high-ranking public official told her, as well as other employees in the Vice President’s office, that Grenell had tried to set up a meeting between Pence and a far-right group, some of whose members may be considered white supremacists. Ex. B. At her deposition, Ms. Troye testified that she was told in conversation with government official named Stephanie Dobitsch (Ex. B, Troye Dep. 91:5-17):

Q: Well, in your response you said, she said something to the effect of: “Oh, and get this, Ric Grenell tried to get Pence to go on -- meet with Nazis.” Were those her words or weren’t those her words?

A: I do remember her walking in and that was her statement. I do remember she said he tried to get Pence to meet with Nazis. And which I was shocked.

Q: And you didn’t ask any follow-up questions, though, about who these Nazis were?

A: I -- I think -- I believe that I was more concerned on whether Pence actually attended the gathering, so I asked if he -- what happened, did Pence go.

Q: What was the answer?

A: No, he did not.

Troye was not the only person to believe this statement, and when she made the statement at issue in this lawsuit, she genuinely believed it to be true. *Id.* See also Exhibit I, (Def. Resp. to P. Interrogatory No. 3) indicating Biran Murphy, a colleague at the Department of Homeland Security, affirmed he also heard of the proposed meeting. No evidence to the contrary has been adduced in discovery in this matter. Supreme Court precedent indicates that the standard applicable is a subjective one, “there must be sufficient evidence to permit the conclusion that the Defendant actually had a ‘high degree of awareness of...probably falsity.’” *Harte-Hanks Commc’ns, Inc. v. Connaughton*, 491 U.S. 657, 688 (1989) citing *Garrison v. Louisiana*, 379 U.S., 64, 74 (1964). Here, Troye’s statements qualify for immunity because they are about matters of public concern, she believed them to be true, and had no knowledge of their actual falsity. See Ex. B, Troye Dep.

68:11 - 70:8. Given as a matter of law, Grenell is public figure and cannot demonstrate malice, his Complaint should respectfully be dismissed in its entirety.

B. Virginia’s Anti-SLAPP Law also Bars the Plaintiff’s Claims and this Separately Merits their Dismissal.

Virginia law immunizes individuals against civil liability for defamation for statements made “regarding matters of public concern that would be protected under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution made by that person that are communicated to a third party,” Va. Code Ann. §8.01-223.2(A). Ms. Troye’s statements were made concerning a matter of public concern, and she had a reasonable belief they were substantially true. Exs. A and B.

Virginia recognizes a defense of substantial truth to claims of defamation, “[s]light inaccuracies of expression are immaterial provided the defamatory charge is true in substance, and it is sufficient to show that the imputation is ‘substantially’ true.” *Jordon*, 269 Va. at 576, *citing Saleeby v. Free Press, Inc.*, 197 Va. 761, 763, (Va. 1956).

Strategic Lawsuit Against Public Participation” (“SLAPP”) lawsuits commonly take the form of defamation suits, like this one. These suits are designed to intimidate and punish an individual for making statements about issues of “public concern” by forcing them to defend against expensive, protracted litigation. Grenell’s performance as Ambassador to Germany, and as acting Director of National Intelligence, was squarely a matter of public concern. Such matters are afforded the highest level of protection under the First Amendment to the Constitution, and Virginia law. *See Jackson v. Hartig*, 645 S.E.2d 303.

Virginia’s anti-SLAPP statute is designed to enable honest and full discourse without fear of reprisal or retaliation. The purpose of the statute is “to deter lawsuits that are designed to chill speech about matters of public concern.” *See McCullough v. Gannett, Co.*, No. 122CV1099RDALRV, 2023 WL 3075940, at *15 (E.D. Va. Apr. 25, 2023). In enacting the statute,

the Commonwealth had precisely this type of suit in mind, those “intended to force upon a political opponent the high cost of defending against a lawsuit.” *See id.*, quoting *ABLV Bank v. Ctr. for Advanced Def. Stud. Inc.*, No. 1:14-cv-1118, 2015 WL 12517012, at *2 (E.D. Va. April 21, 2015).

In this case, Troye’s single tweet was clearly about a matter of public concern, and she had a good faith basis for believing it to be true, particularly because others have repeated the same or similar factual allegations. Ex. A. Moreover, the public record reveals that this lawsuit was purposefully designed to try and chill the speech of perceived political opponents—to intimidate Ms. Troye and others who have voiced opposition to former President Donald J. Trump. It is a political stunt at its heart to stifle criticism and cause perceived opponents to incur legal fees so that they would shy away from further comments.

The Plaintiff’s lawsuit is being directly funded, at least in part, by Kashyap Patel, a former government official and outspoken MAGA supporter, and/or his charity, FightwithKash.com. Patel has stated that “the whole point” of his charity is “helping other people” in need, but he has also said its work is, at least in part, about bringing “America First patriots” together and “helping fight the Deep State.” ABC News, Trump loyalist Kash Patel’s tax-exempt charity raises questions, experts say, March 8, 2023, at <https://abcnews.go.com/US/trump-loyalist-kash-patels-tax-exempt-charity-raises/story?id=97657747>, attached at Exhibit C.⁷

Upon the filing of this lawsuit, Grenell, Patel and Jesse Binnall, the Plaintiff’s attorney, took to social media to announce their objectives. Their intentions were plain and clear: to punish “RINOs” and fight the “Deep State,” not to vindicate any supposed damage to Grenell’s reputation:

⁷ On March 3, 2023, Plaintiff’s counsel, Jesse Binnall, attended the Conservative Political Action Conference and confirmed that Patel was funding this lawsuit. Exhibit C. As part of discovery, Grenell has acknowledged that \$7,500.00 has been received. Exhibit D. Response to Def. Interrogatory No. 24.



Patel has not hesitated to exclaim that these types of litigation efforts are designed for a very specific purpose.

“Victory here is not the end result,” says Patel. “It is to expose the fraudulent reporting by so many in the mainstream media and the only way to do that is expose their corrupt sources and that is what the judge has granted us permission to do.”

New York Post, “Ex-House ‘Russiagate’ investigator Kash Patel sues Politico over impeachment lies”, March 22, 2023, at <https://nypost.com/2023/03/22/ex-house-russiagate-investigator-kash-patel-sues-politico-over-impeachment-lies/>. (Ex. E). Indeed, Patel has now filed numerous lawsuits against members of the media, other third-parties and the U.S. Government, all part of his efforts to take down the “Deep State,” of which Ms. Troye – per their view - is a member.⁸

⁸ Not coincidentally, Grenell’s attorneys directly represent Patel as well. The lead attorney, Jesse Binnall, in fact, is a Board Member on Patel’s Foundation. Exhibit F.

If this case is being funded by a third party as a fight against the “Deep State” rather than a true attempt to recover personal damages to the Plaintiff, this is exactly the type of case Virginia’s anti-SLAPP statute is designed to protect against. *See McCullough v. Gannett, Co.*, No. 122CV1099RDALRV, 2023 WL 3075940, at *15 (E.D. Va. Apr. 25, 2023).

Therefore, Grenell’s Complaint should respectfully be dismissed in its entirety.

C. Plaintiff’s Defamation Claim Must be Dismissed Given he has Admitted no Damages were Suffered Which is a Prerequisite Under Virginia Law.

At a minimum, were this Court not to see fit to dismiss the entirety of the Plaintiff’s Complaint for one or more of the reasons stated above, his defamation claim (Count I) must respectfully be dismissed outright.

Where there is a public-figure plaintiff, as there is here, a verdict for the plaintiff on simple defamation can only be sustained where actual damage has occurred as a result of the statement. *See* Jury Instruction No. 37.095. Grenell has testified under oath as part of his deposition that he has not suffered any actual damages, and denied being asked about the tweet by his employers or associates. Ex. G. On whether his employers or associates had indicated the tweet impacted their view of him, Grenell testified (Ex. G, Dep. Tr. 57:2-19):

Q: Now, you talked about reputational damage. Have you lost any income because of Ms. Troye’s tweets?

A: How would I know? Nothing that I know.

Q: Has anyone -- have you had any conversations with anyone, besides your lawyers and your partner, about Ms. Troye’s tweets or tweet?

A: Not that I can recall.

Q: Did anyone from Affinity ever mention Ms. Troye’s tweet to you?

A: Never.

Q: Did anyone from Exos ever mention Ms. Troye’s tweet to you?

A: Never.

Q: Did anybody from Newsmax ever mention the Olivia Troye tweet to you?

A: Not that I recall, although it might have been on Newsmax.

When questioned specifically about any emotional distress or medical damages:

Q. With respect to the impact of the statement in Ms. Troye's tweet, have you received any type of counseling for any emotional stress or damages that you suffered?

A. No.

Q. Are you on any medication as a result of --

A. No.

Q. Or impact from the tweet?

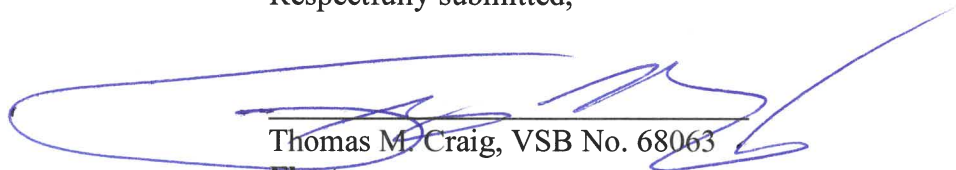
A. Sorry, no.

See Ex. G, Grenell's Dep. Tr. 126:12-21; *see also* 57:20 – 58:8; 64:6 – 17. Nor has he provided evidence of even one cent of actual damages in response to both interrogatory and document production requests. See Ex. H – Grenell's responses to Defendant's Request for Production 1. Therefore, Grenell cannot, as a matter of Virginia law, demonstrate that Ms. Troye defamed him and his defamation claim must fail instantly.⁹

WHEREFORE, for the stated reasons, the Defendant moves the Court to grant her Plea in Bar, and dismiss the Plaintiff's Complaint with prejudice.

Dated: October 6, 2023

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas M. Craig, VSB No. 68063

Fluet

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Counsel for Defendant

⁹ Given that Grenell cannot show that Ms. Troye acted with actual malice, no punitive damages are available either. *Gertz v. Robert Welch, Inc.*, 41 L. Ed. 2d 789, (1974).

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on October 6, 2023, a true and correct copy of the foregoing Defendant Olivia Troye's Plea in Bar to Plaintiff's Complaint for Defamation was served via email, facsimile, and U.S. Mail to the following attorneys of record:

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Jason Greaves, Esq.
BINNALL LAW GROUP, PLLC
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Thomas M. Craig, Esq.

Exhibit A



The far right

● This article is more than 1 year old

German court rules far-right AfD party a suspected threat to democracy

Domestic intelligence agency can now tap communications and use undercover informants to spy on activities

Staff and agencies

Tue 8 Mar 2022 17:21 EST

A German court has ruled that the far-right [Alternative for Germany](#) (AfD) can be classified as a suspected threat to democracy, paving the way for the domestic intelligence agency to spy on the opposition party.

The court dismissed a legal challenge brought by the AfD last March that delayed plans by Germany's Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV) to [put the party under surveillance](#).

The administrative court in Cologne however found that there were "sufficient indications of anti-constitutional goals within the AfD", it said in a statement.

As a result, the BfV is allowed to officially classify the anti-Islam, anti-immigrant party as a "suspected case of right-wing extremism".

The classification authorises intelligence agents to tap the party's communications and use undercover informants.

AfD leaders had sought to argue that the party had distanced itself from its most extreme members by disbanding the hardline "Wing" faction led by Bjoern Hoecke.

But judges in Cologne said key figures from the faction still had "significant influence" in the party.

The court also criticised the extremist leanings of the AfD's youth wing, saying along with former "Wing" supporters these members believed that the "German people should be kept ethnically intact and 'outsiders' should be excluded as far as possible".

"This goes against the Basic Law," the court said, referring to Germany's constitution.

Founded in 2013, the AfD started out as an anti-euro outfit before morphing into an anti-immigrant party.

After seizing on public anger over an influx of refugees in 2015-2016, the party stunned Germany's political establishment to win its first seats in the national parliament in 2017.

It has since been weakened by endless infighting and waning concerns about immigration.

The AfD scored just over 10% of the vote in last year's general election, down from almost 13% previously, despite efforts to court critics of the government's coronavirus restrictions.

Jörg Meuthen quit as the party's co-leader in January, accusing the AfD of drifting too far to the right and displaying "totalitarian" leanings.

Article count **on**

You've read 20 articles in the last year

I hope you appreciated this article. Before you move on, I was hoping you would consider taking the step of supporting the Guardian's journalism.

From Elon Musk to Rupert Murdoch, a small number of billionaire owners have a powerful hold on so much of the information that reaches the public about what's happening in the world. The Guardian is different. We have no billionaire owner or shareholders to consider. Our journalism is produced to serve the public interest - not profit motives.

And we avoid the trap that befalls much US media - the tendency, born of a desire to please all sides, to engage in false equivalence in the name of neutrality. While fairness guides everything we do, we know there is a right and a wrong position in the fight against racism and for reproductive justice. When we report on issues like the climate crisis, we're not afraid to name who is responsible. And as a global news organization, we're able to provide a fresh, outsider perspective on US politics - one so often missing from the insular American media bubble.

Around the world, readers can access the Guardian's paywall-free journalism because of our unique reader-supported model. That's because of people like you. Our readers keep us independent, beholden to no outside influence and accessible to everyone - whether they can afford to pay for news, or not.

If you can, please consider supporting us just once from \$1, or better yet, support us every month with a little more. Thank you.

Betsy Reed

Editor, Guardian US



Single	Monthly	Annual
\$5 per month	\$7 per month	Other

Continue →

Remind me in August





Prominent figure in German far-right party charged over alleged Nazi slogan

World Jun 5, 2023 5:00 PM EDT

BERLIN (AP) — A prominent figure in the far-right Alternative for Germany party has been charged over his alleged use in a 2021 speech of a slogan used by the Nazis’ SA stormtroopers, German prosecutors said Monday.

Prosecutors in the eastern city of Halle said that Björn Höcke was charged with public use of a symbol of an unconstitutional organization. Höcke, an influential figure on the hard right of Alternative for Germany, heads his party’s branch in the neighboring eastern state of Thuringia.

Höcke is accused of ending a speech to some 250 people in Merseburg in May 2021 with the words “Everything for Germany!”

READ MORE: Centrists alarmed as poll shows growing support for German far-right party

Prosecutors charge that he was aware of the origin of the phrase as an SA slogan. In a statement, they said Höcke’s lawyers had denied that his words had any “criminal relevance.”

Alternative for Germany, or AfD, has come under increasing scrutiny from Germany’s domestic intelligence agency, which has placed its Thuringia branch under formal observation.

Höcke has in the past espoused revisionist views of Germany’s Nazi past. In 2018, he called the Holocaust memorial in Berlin a “monument of shame” and called for Germany to perform a “180-degree turn” when it comes to the way it remembers its past. A party tribunal at the time rejected a bid to have him expelled.

The charges against Höcke come as Germany’s mainstream parties are trading blame for polls showing support for AfD reaching a record high.

By — Associated Press



NEWS BREAKING NEWS

Jewish Democratic Leader Smears Richard Grenell as Nazi Supporter — Then Blocks Critics

12/23/2020 0 713



Joel Pollak/Breitbart News

Joel B. Pollak

Halie Soifer, the CEO of the Jewish Democratic Council of America, claimed Tuesday that Ambassador Richard Grenell had “emboldened actual neo-Nazis” — and she was promptly met by criticism from Jewish leaders and conservatives.

Grenell has served as U.S. Ambassador to Germany, playing a crucial role in pushing Europe to isolate Iran and to declare Hezbollah a terrorist organization, among other achievements. He also served as Acting Director of National Intelligence, becoming the first LGBTQ American to be appointed to a Cabinet role.

Soifer was commenting on President Donald Trump’s [decision](#) Tuesday to appoint Grenell to the [U.S. Holocaust Memorial Council](#), which supports the U.S. Holocaust Museum.



Soifer tweeted: “Today, Trump appointed Richard Grenell to the Holocaust Memorial Council. As US Amy to Germany, Grenell sought to ‘empower’ far-right parties & anti-establishment conservatives in Europe.

Others have been unqualified, but he's emboldened actual neo-Nazis."

Soifer linked to an [article](#) by the BBC in which Germans were described as having criticized Grenell for comments on the success of conservative parties across Europe.

Grenell made his comments in an [interview](#) with Breitbart News. He said: "I absolutely want to empower other conservatives throughout Europe, other leaders. I think there is a groundswell of conservative policies that are taking hold because of the failed policies of the left."

He never supported far-right parties, nor did the BBC interview mention "neo-Nazis."

Several individuals and organizations responded to Soifer's false accusation, asking her to retract and apologize.

In 2019, Grenell helped [lead](#) the first-ever official U.S. government delegation to the March of the Living, an annual Holocaust commemoration in Auschwitz and Birkenau. Breitbart News interviewed him at the infamous death camp:

"For me, this is just deeply moving and really hard to deal with," Ambassador Grenell told Breitbart News as he walked through the museum at Auschwitz.

"I can't stop thinking about the individual faces and the stories, what they were thinking in this moment."

In response to criticism of her comments, Soifer blocked many of her critics, including Grenell himself, on Twitter.

. @HALIESOIFER WAS FOLLOWING ME TODAY UNTIL SHE GOT MASSIVE PUSHBACK FOR HER OFFENSIVE TWEET. SHE NOW BLOCKS ME. LOL. #RECKLESS
[HTTPS://T.CO/HKGLEYNFVG](https://t.co/HKGLEYNFVG) [PIC.TWITTER.COM/VGXHTRNQPZ](https://t.co/VGXHTRNQPZ)

— RICHARD GRENELL (@RICHARDGRENELL) DECEMBER 23, 2020

Soifer attempted to defend her comments on Wednesday, falsely claiming that Grenell had supported "far-right populists."

Grenell responded indirectly to that claim, noting that he had "never empowered the far-right"

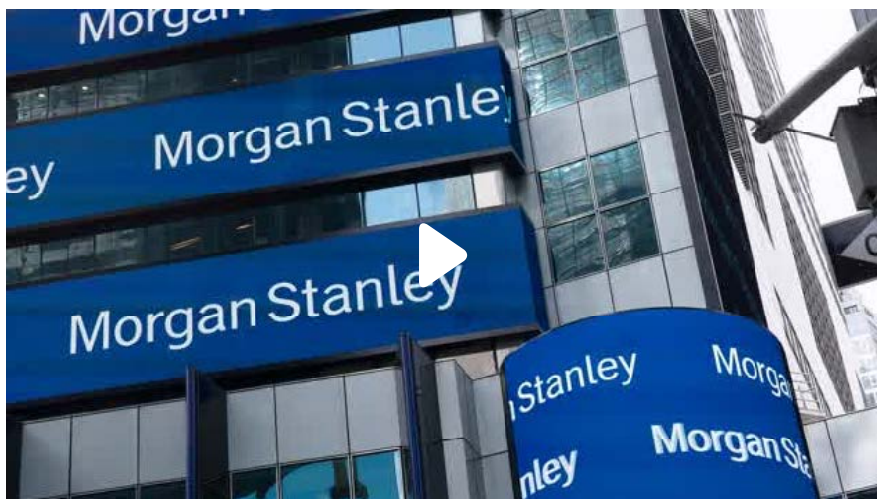
In September, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) criticized Soifer's organization for abusing the memory of the Holocaust by attempting to compare the U.S. under President Donald Trump in 2020 to Nazi Germany under Adolf Hitler in the 1930s



Soifer's Twitter profile identifies her as a former national security advisor for Vice President-elect Kamala Harris, as well as a former "senior policy advisor" in the Obama administration.

In 2017, outgoing President Barack Obama named national security aide Ben Rhodes to the Holocaust Memorial Council. Rhodes had led efforts to negotiate a nuclear deal with the antisemitic Iranian regime, and had pushed anti-Israel policies, leading to widespread criticism of his appointment.

Breitbart

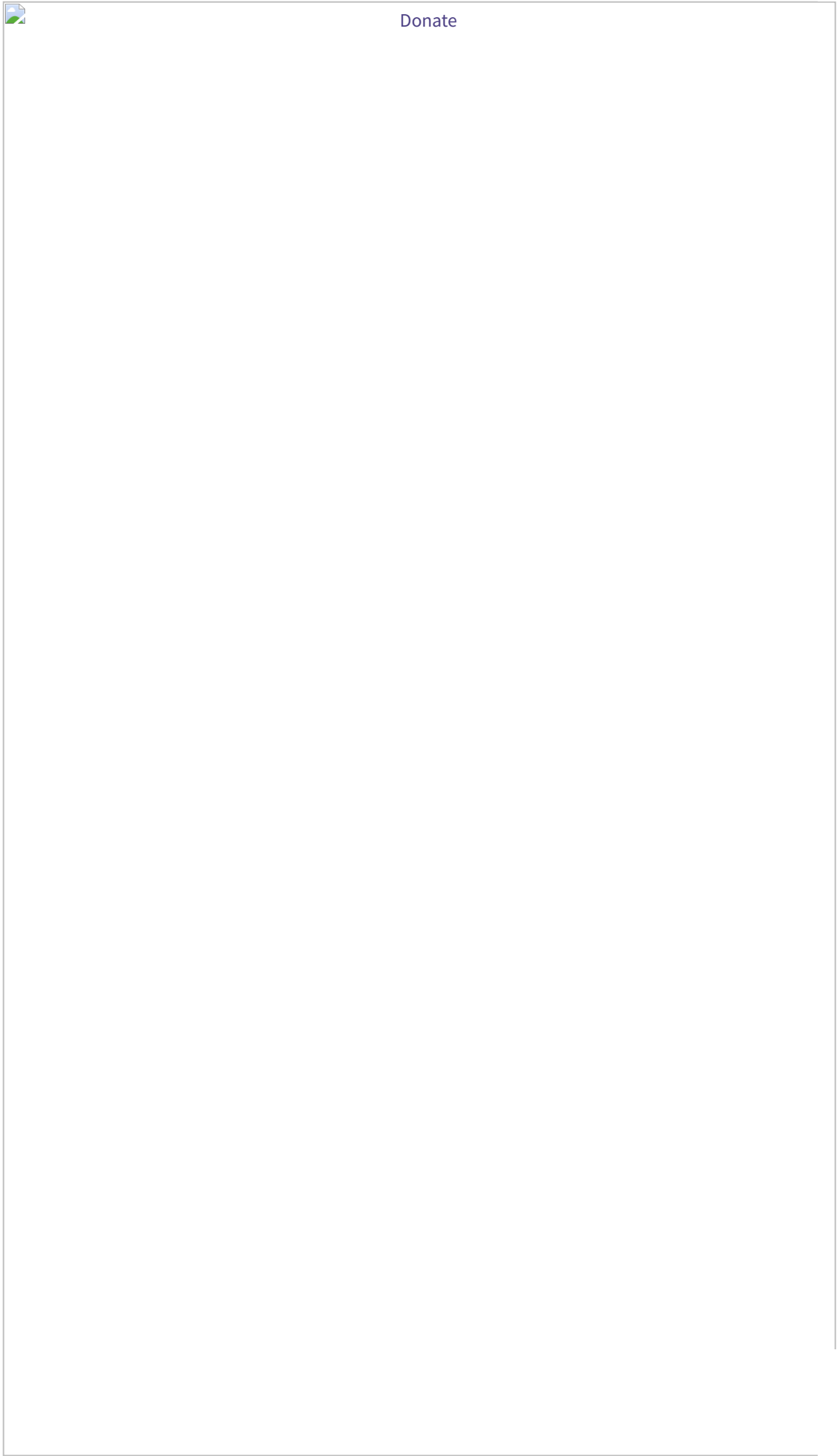






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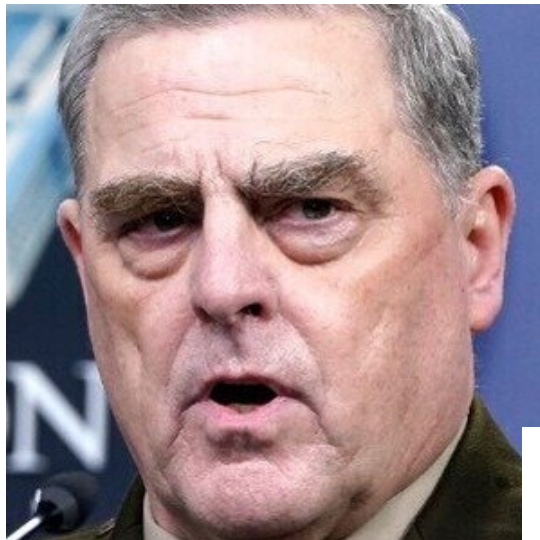
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The gay Trump adviser alleged voter fraud at a press conference but offered no proof of it.

BY DANIEL REYNOLDS

NOVEMBER 05 2020 1:11 PM EST



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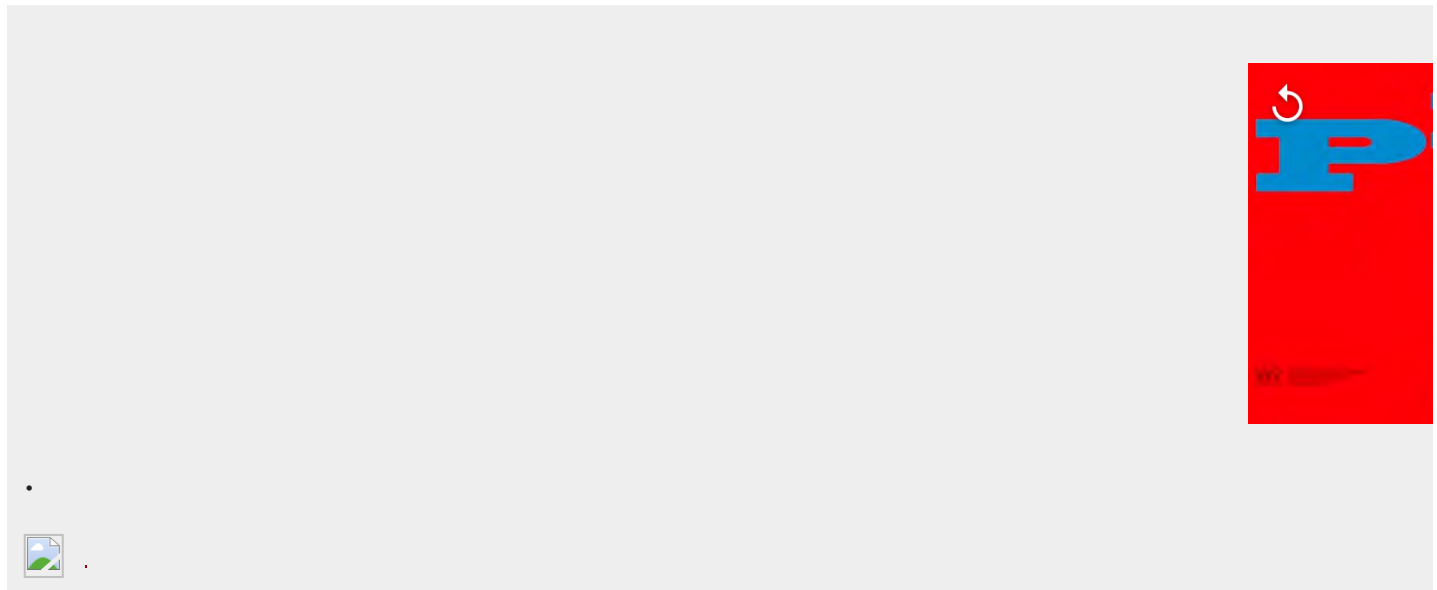
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Nevada polling center.

There, he was "announcing a federal lawsuit to stop counting illegal ballots in Nevada. Clark County officials must start answering questions as to why. We demand transparency," he summed up on **Twitter**. At the conference, he claimed that thousands of votes were cast illegally and the polling center lacked proper election observers.

Despite the enormity of his accusations, Grenell refused to answer questions from reporters. "You're here to take in information," he **told them**. When the unmasked campaigner was chased down by MSNBC reporter Jacob Soboroff, who challenged his assertions -- "Where is the evidence of the fraud?" he asked -- Grenell ducked into a nearby van.



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
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Nevada is one of the targets of lawsuits from the Trump campaign during a presidential election where these ballots may be the deciding factor.

Watch Grenell evade the press below.



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BREAKING: [@jacobsboroff](#) demands evidence from Ric Grenell, Trump adviser and former acting director of national intelligence, to back up his assertions about votes in Nevada.



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TRUMP'S RIGHT HAND MAN IN EUROPE RICK GRENELL WANTS TO 'EMPOWER' EUROPEAN CONSERVATIVES

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by [CHRIS TOMLINSON](#) · 3 Jun 2018 · 1,558

BERLIN, Germany: Trumpian U.S. Ambassador to Germany Richard Grenell has expressed great excitement over the wave of conservatism in Europe, saying he wants to “empower” leaders of the movement.

At a sit-down interview at his official residence in Berlin with Breitbart London, Ambassador Grenell said: “There are a lot of conservatives throughout Europe who have contacted me to say they are feeling there is a resurgence going on.”

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“There’s no question about that and it’s an exciting time for me. I look across the landscape and we’ve got a lot of work to do but I think the election of Donald Trump has empowered individuals and people to say that they can’t just allow the political class to determine before an election takes place, who’s going to win and who should run.”

The U.S. ambassador spoke of the small circle of political and media elites saying, “That’s a very powerful moment when you can grasp the ability to see past the group-think of a very small elitist crowd telling you you have no chance to win or you’ll never win, or they mock you early on.”

Since the presidential race in 2016, the German media has largely been united against President Trump, with some publications, like magazine *Der Spiegel*, going to extremes, publishing a cover featuring the president [decapitating the Statue of Liberty](#).

The winning strategy, Grenell noted, is focusing on conservative issues that improve life for ordinary working people, the silent majority, saying the “support is massive” for candidates that can articulate “consistent conservative” policies on migration, tax cuts, and cutting red tape and bureaucracy.

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Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz. (Photo: EMMANUEL DUNAND/AFP/Getty Images)

Unafraid to name names, Mr Grenell expressed a deep respect and admiration for the young Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz saying, “Look, I think Sebastian Kurz is a rockstar. I’m a big fan.”

Chancellor Kurz, leader of the conservative Austrian People’s Party (ÖVP), [formed a coalition](#) with the populist Freedom Party (FPÖ) earlier this year, and has been one of the strongest advocates for securing the European Union’s external border.

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He was also been a leading conservative on the topic of counter-Islamisation while Foreign Minister in the previous coalition government, advocating and helping to [pass a ban](#) on the full-face Islamic veil.

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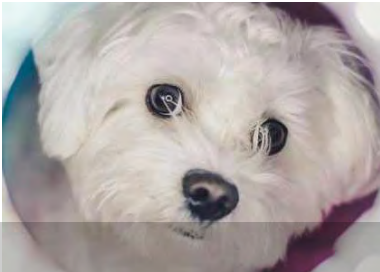
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Grenell says not meeting with German far-right leader a 'difficult thing':

Stuart Milk, Trump's LGBTQ outreach adviser spar at debate

Published 2 years ago on October 6, 2020

By **Chris Johnson** 

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Richard Grenell said not meeting with Germany's far-right leader was a "difficult thing." (Photo domain)



Richard Grenell, who has become the face of LGBTQ outreach in President Trump's re-campaign, said not meeting during his time in the administration with Germany's far-right leader Alice Weidel, a lesbian, as he met with other party leaders was a "difficult thing" according to a report Monday in the Carnegie Mellon University student newspaper [The Tartan](#).

Grenell was quoted making those remarks in the context of a debate that took place at the Institute for Politics & Strategy with Stuart Milk, the nephew of gay rights pioneer Harvey Milk who has continued his uncle's legacy to advance LGBTQ rights. The two worked together on the Trump administration's global initiative to decriminalize homosexuality, which was the focus of the debate.

When discussion shifted to answering a question about the rise of right-wing movements in Europe and the threat they pose to LGBTQ rights, Grenell hedged, arguing it's "not a white issue" and both Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel and the far-left German Green Party are "not good on gay rights," according to the [The Tartan](#). (Merkel as chancellor of Germany allowed a vote to legalize same-sex marriage, but cast a vote against it.)



That's when Grenell reportedly said a "difficult thing" for him was meeting with the far-right German party, which he dubiously claimed was bad on LGBTQ rights, but not meeting with the Alternative for Deutschland (AfD), the far-right German party, citing "an embassy protocol would not meet [with AfD]." The party leader, Alice Weidel, rails against immigration in Germany, and opposes LGBTQ rights even though she's an out lesbian.

Milk reportedly was quick to disagree with Grenell about the lack of danger of the rise of right-wing movements in Europe, saying "it is something that should be on everyone's table," according to the [Tartan](#).

Tartan. Milk reportedly cited anti-LGBTQ rollback in Hungary under Viktor Orban and the personal story of an LGBTQ activist he had worked with for years being killed in F

Grenell, in response to an email inquiry from the Washington Blade on whether he would flesh out his comments that not meeting with Weidel was a “difficult thing,” was characteristically defiant and vague in disputing the quoted remarks in The Tartan re

“You didn’t hear the conversation or even a single sentence of it and your gossip-style telephone is not what I said at all and is typical of how you always distort what Repul say and do,” Grenell wrote.

Grenell has previously made favorable remarks about conservatives in Europe. As U.S. ambassador to Germany, Grenell gave an interview to Breitbart News in which he said “absolutely [wants] to empower other conservatives throughout Europe” and praised Sebastian Kurz. (During the debate, Grenell was quoted as denying the report, calling question on it “silly” and saying he wanted to “empower people like me, which mean and gay conservatives.”)

The main focus of the debate, however, was the global initiative to decriminalize homosexuality. Although critics have said it amounted to nothing, Grenell has defend progress on the initiative.

According to The Tartan, discussion quickly shifted away from the initiative to a debate between Grenell and Milk on their approach to LGBTQ rights and the best presidential candidate in the 2020 election on that issue.

Milk expressed strong support for Joe Biden, although he emphasized his political view separate from the Milk Foundation, which has 501(c) status, and Grenell explained his support for Trump despite the anti-LGBTQ record the incumbent has developed during his administration, according to The Tartan.

When Grenell dubiously claimed Trump is the “first president in history to come into supporting gay marriage,” apparently based on comments Trump made after the 2010 when he said he was “fine” with the Supreme Court ruling for same-sex marriage, Milk reportedly countered with details about Trump’s anti-LGBTQ record

Milk reportedly cited the transgender military ban and a 2016 Republican Party Platform endorsed legislation allowing religious exemptions to discriminate against LGBTQ pe

Milk also pointed out Vice President Mike Pence spoke at a conference for the anti-L Family Research Council.

A key moment came when Grenell, questioned on whether the global initiative to decriminalize homosexuality included support for transgender rights, said he “[fights and lesbian rights” and is “not a trans activist”, though he is “a full supporter of trans and added that decriminalization is “the first step” when it comes to LGBTQ rights, a to The Tartan.

But Milk reportedly didn’t accept that transgender exclusion from the LGBTQ movement insisting transgender rights aren’t separate and “any type of criminalization against element of the LGBT community is a criminalization of us all.” According to a recent report, [at least 13 member states criminalize being transgender](#).

Milk didn’t respond Tuesday to the Washington Blade’s request to comment on whether would dispute any aspect of the report in The Tartan.

Bill Brink, a spokesperson for the Institute for Politics & Strategy, said in response to inquiry from the Washington Blade the event was recorded, but the school won’t make recording public because the event was off the record. Asked to dispute any part of the in The Tartan, Brink referred to his previous comment.

The Tartan report acknowledges a spokesperson for the Institute for Politics & Strategy declared the event off the record to allow the speakers to be “candid” and give the “best information possible,” but the report says the debate was “open to anyone affiliated with Carnegie Mellon with no written agreement to keep the details of the talk off the record.

Read more at [The Tartan](#).

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Trump aide accused of Nazi ties — and a former Pence advisor says it's true



By **Bob Brigham**

Published **April 08, 2022**



Richard Grenell and Donald Trump (Twitter).



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Former acting Director of National Intelligence Richard Grenell was accused of having Nazi ties by a U.S. congressman on Friday.

It started when Ambassador Richard Grenell was called out by Rep. Ted Lieu (D-CA) for his "stupid, racist sh*t."

"I served on active duty to defend your right to say stupid stuff. To the extent you now randomly mention China because of my race, then you're saying stupid, racist sh*t," Lieu said.

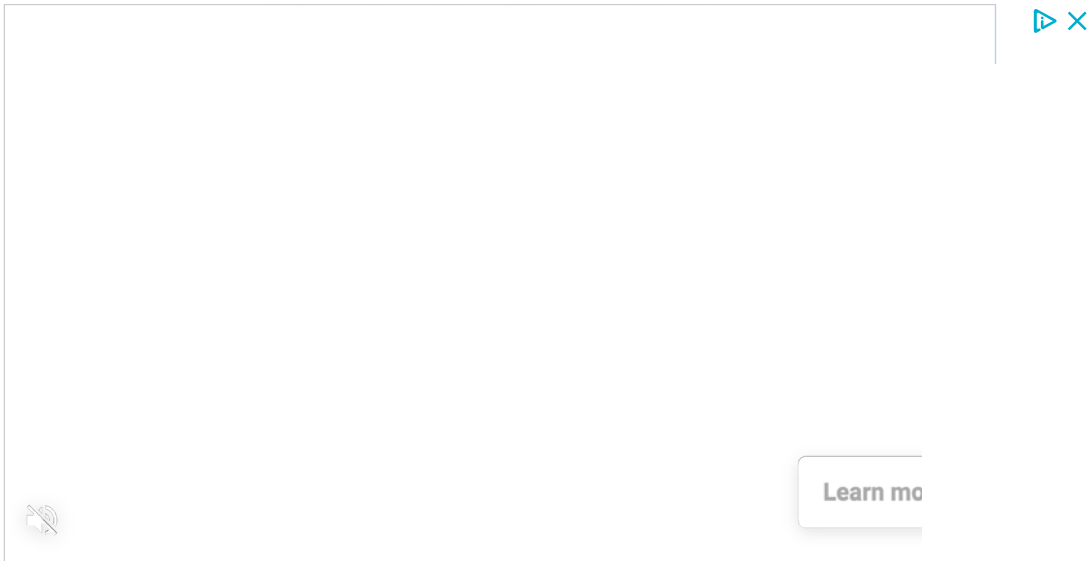
Rep. Eric Swalwell (D-CA) decided to offer his thoughts on the former Trump aide.

"Hey Ted Lieu, did you know Richard Grenell used to hang out with Nazis when he was supposed to be representing us in Germany?" he asked.

"To be honest, I don't really know much about Grennell. (I just view him as a boring internet troll). Do you have proof of this?" Lieu asked.

And then the conversation was joined by Olivia Troye, who served as a homeland security advisor to Vice President Mike Pence.

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"I do. While in his role as Ambassador, Grennell tried to get Mike Pence to attend a white supremacist gathering during one of his overseas trips," she wrote.



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Dear **@RichardGrenell**: I served on active duty to defend your right to say stupid stuff.

To the extent you now randomly mention China because of my race, then you're saying stupid, racist shit.

Also, did you come up with LIEu all by yourself?

Impressive.

Richard Grenell  @RichardGrenell

Ted LIEu spent years delivering the Beijing line that Hunter Biden's laptop was Russian disinformation.

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 **Richard Grenell**  @RichardGrenell

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Ted Lieu  · Apr 8, 2022

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US House candidate, CA-36

Replying to @RepSwalwell and @RichardGrenell

To be honest, I don't really know much about Grennell. (I just view him as a boring internet troll). Do you have proof of this?"



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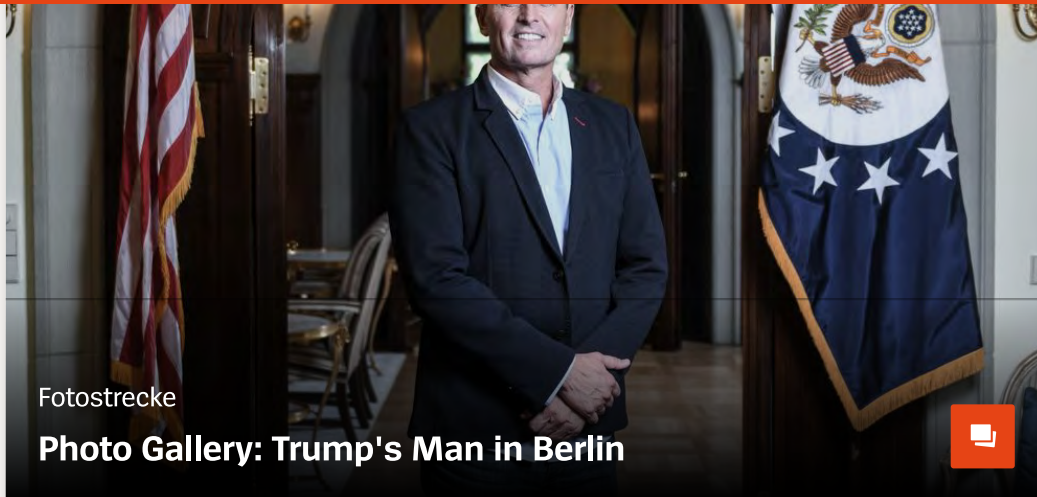




Startseite > International > World > United States > U.S. Ambassador Richard Grenell Is Isolated in Berlin

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Photo Gallery: Trump's Man in Berlin

Isolated in Berlin

Trump's Ambassador Finds Few Friends in Germany

Since arriving in Berlin as U.S. ambassador to Germany, Richard Grenell has flouted diplomatic conventions and attempted to interfere in domestic politics. He has since become politically isolated in the German capital.

Von **Konstantin von Hammerstein**

11.01.2019, 18.46 Uhr



Tucker Carlson's worldview doesn't come across as

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has described him as "literally our greatest ally." His most prominent viewer is Donald Trump.

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In late November, "Tucker Carlson Tonight" once again tackled the subject of immigration, and, not for the first time, Germany. On the show, "Lessons from Germany" appeared in big red letters next to a photo of a grim German Chancellor Angela Merkel, her face framed by a Russian and a Turkish flag.

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Carlson was joined by a special guest from Berlin, a man with short, gelled hair sitting before a backdrop of the nighttime Brandenburg Gate dressed in a suit jacket but no tie: U.S. Ambassador Richard Grenell. The 52-year-old has been Trump's man in the German capital since May.

Carlson was happy to cede the spotlight for the interview. After all, Grenell didn't need much encouragement. He had been a pundit on Fox News for a long time and knew what was expected of him. He is not known for keeping his opinions to himself.

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The ambassador made it clear in just a few sentences how little he thought of the chancellor's refugee policy. "There was no plan in place," he said, "so the policy really fell apart." He claimed that anyone calling for secure borders in Germany today faces an "overreaction." The discourse, he said, is largely being controlled by "elites in Berlin" and he argued that anyone who speaks openly about the issue runs the risk of being portrayed as being part of the "radical far-right" by the German media.

Sebastian Kurz, Grenell said, "won in a very big way" in Austria because he called for clear immigration rules. As a result, he said, the young chancellor was becoming popular "throughout Germany," adding that everyday Germans and Europeans were yearning for leaders who want secure borders.

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Grenell's TV interview was a thinly veiled call for a change of government in Berlin. It was akin to a German ambassador in Washington attacking the American president's immigration policy on German public television and then touting Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau as a role model.

Refrain from Meddling

Article 41 of the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relationships obligates diplomats to refrain from meddling in their guest country's domestic affairs. Their duty is to cultivate discreet contacts within the country's government apparatus and to further their own government's positions.

In Berlin, the representatives of Germany's most important ally usually have the easiest jobs. Many previous U.S. ambassadors were major political and social figures in the capital, enjoying excellent connections to the Chancellery and federal ministries, and playing host to the most powerful and influential personalities in Germany.

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Barack Obama's ambassador, Philip Murphy, invited longtime adversaries Helmut Kohl and Merkel to his dining room in 2012 for discreet talks aimed at reducing the tensions between them. By the time his tenure was over after four years, he had made so many friends he had to rent out the Olympic Stadium for his goodbye party.

Grenell has taken a different path. On the day he took up his post, he tweeted that "German companies doing business in Iran should wind down operations immediately." Martin Schulz, the former head of the center-left Social Democratic Party, compared his behavior to that of "a right-wing extremist colonial officer." Four weeks later in Breitbart, the main organ of the pro-Trump, right-wing "alt-right" movement, Grenell essentially called for regime change. "I absolutely want to empower other conservatives throughout Europe," he said.

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summer, though not necessarily by choice. He still tweets assiduously and he never seems to say no when Fox News calls, but in Berlin, he has largely become isolated. The powerful avoid him. Doors have been shut. Few politicians to the left of the right-wing populist Alternative for Germany (AFD) and the populist-conservative Christian Social Union (CSU), the Bavarian sister party of Merkel's center-right Christian Democrats (CDU), want to be seen with him.

Anti-Americanism

In the week before Christmas, Grenell wrote a letter to DER SPIEGEL  about the Relotius case, in which longtime DER SPIEGEL journalist Claas Relotius was revealed to have invented reporting for several of his stories , including about the United States. Grenell was justifiably angry, but he didn't stop there. He accused DER SPIEGEL of anti-Americanism, writing that the United States was clearly "targeted by institutional bias."

DER SPIEGEL editors and reporters, he argued, had regularly published reports "which could have been proven untrue if they had checked the facts with the Embassy first." He also wrote that "unfortunately, it is common practice for Spiegel reporters to not even call us before writing."

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Ambassador Grenell's Letter to DER SPIEGEL

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list of questions with a written statement: "All seven of your questions are based on fabricated stories that are not true. Every one of the questions assumes something that is false. Konstantin von Hammerstein uses the same tactics as Claas Relotius by pushing a false narrative with anonymous sources."

Because the ambassador was unwilling to grant an interview, DER SPIEGEL focused its reporting on conversations with more than 30 sources who have come into contact with Grenell. These include numerous American and German diplomats, cabinet members, lawmakers, high-ranking officials, lobbyists and think tank experts. They were all willing to speak openly but did not want to be quoted by name.

Almost all of these sources paint an unflattering portrait of the ambassador, one remarkably similar to Donald Trump, the man who sent him to Berlin. A majority of them describe Grenell as a vain, narcissistic person who dishes out aggressively, but can barely handle criticism. His brash demeanor, some claim, hides a deep insecurity, and they say he thirsts for the approval of others. After one of his appearances, we were told, he asked almost shyly how he had done.

They also say Grenell knows little about Germany and Europe, that he ignores most of the dossiers his colleagues at the embassy write for him, and that his knowledge of the subject matter is superficial. "Ric only scratches the surface," said one person who regularly interacts with him.

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note that it is unconventional for the head of government to personally receive an ambassador because of their different ranks, but that is only half the truth. She was constantly in close contact with Murphy during his stint in Berlin, and former Israeli ambassador Shimon Stein has been a close friend of Merkel's since his time in Berlin.

Murphy came to Berlin in mid-October. The Democrat is now the governor of New Jersey, and, unlike Grenell, he is still liked and well-connected in Germany. Through his friend Christoph Heusgen, the German ambassador to the U.N. in New York, he sent out feelers about whether the chancellor might want to meet him for a brief coffee.

Merkel politely declined. She didn't want to annoy Trump unnecessarily by inviting one of his most prominent critics into the Chancellery. And then there was Grenell: How was she to credibly brush him off after meeting with one of his predecessors? Murphy understood. Maybe next time.

Anyone who doesn't absolutely need to meet Grenell avoids it. "I have no interest in people who are going through Europe with a wrecking ball," says former Green Party co-chair Cem Özdemir. He is one of several prominent politicians who keep their contact to the American ambassador to a minimum.

In conversations with parliamentarians, the ambassador apparently pushed hard for invitations to visit lawmakers in their constituencies. Many said no. Who, after all, wants to be seen in their home district with Grenell? And those who did invite him, didn't all have the best things to say about the experience.

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A Reunion of Friends

During the visit, executives from a mid-sized company told the ambassador about the difficulties they were facing  because of the U.S. sanctions on Iran. Shortly thereafter, Grenell tweeted: "Another industry leader leaves Iran. #sanctionsareworking."

On Oct. 3, Emily Haber, the German ambassador in Washington, invited guests to the embassy's annual party celebrating the anniversary of German unification in the garden of her residence. The embassy grounds are located on a steep hillside, and on that warm autumn evening, the lights of the capital sparkled in the darkness below. The U.S. Air Force band played rock n' roll while Germans and Americans stood in line waiting for beer at the Bavarian stand.

Everything seemed as it always had been -- a reunion of good, old friends -- but there was a shadow hanging over the event. Crises are a normal part of the trans-Atlantic relationship, much like arguments in any marriage. But ever since Trump came to power, many people in Berlin political circles believe Washington is pushing them into the arms of a divorce lawyer.

That afternoon, a high-ranking official from the German Foreign Ministry unwittingly demonstrated just how broken the relationship has become. After mentioning the "German-American community of values," she suddenly paused and had to laugh. A community of values with Trump? What an absurd idea!

The American president has ... of the European Union ...

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He was also at the party that evening. The ambassador happened to be in Washington and, in accordance with the dictates of politesse, received an invitation. But people weren't particularly happy to see him. Those working in the German Foreign Ministry and Defense Ministry haven't forgotten his catastrophic early days as ambassador and now believe he is unapologetically trying to force himself into all kinds of German-American conversations. Why, for example, did the U.S. ambassador need to be present when the German defense minister visited her American counterpart at the Pentagon?

First Among Equals

Many people who have encountered Grenell in the last few months believe he only wanted to come to Berlin to further his career in Washington. Germany is considered the most important country in Europe, and those wishing -- like Trump -- to erode Europe must pull the initial lever in Berlin.

Grenell seems to see himself as the first among equals of U.S. ambassadors in Europe. In mid-December, he commented on the protest movement in France on Fox News and received the president of Kosovo in Berlin. His counterparts in other EU countries follow these appearances warily. They aren't planning on subordinating themselves to him.

Thus far, his posting in Berlin hasn't done much to help his career in Washington. In Trump's world, the only people who matter are those he takes notice of. Germany is geographically much too far away -- and it wasn't long before Grenell seemed

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the American public, seem to be less important to him than the person sitting in the Oval Office.

Reaching Trump requires appearing on Fox News, and Grenell seems to use every opportunity to go on one of its shows. Sometimes he appears from Berlin, commenting on the political situation in Germany and Europe like a foreign correspondent, and sometimes he is in Washington, fawning over his president.

"I saw him up close today," he said after the chancellor's visit to the White House in late April. Grenell closed his eyes, apparently moved, then looked at the blonde host. "He is a master negotiator," he said, "watching him up close today for me just really solidified why I early on wanted to support Donald Trump."

Grenell spent eight years as a spokesman for the US Permanent Representative to the UN in New York, some of which under John Bolton, the right-wing hardliner selected by Trump as national security adviser. But Grenell markets his experience in the international community so aggressively he makes it sound like he himself was the UN ambassador.

Lukewarm Evening

Indeed, when the American ambassador to the UN, Nikki Haley, announced her resignation, Grenell's conservative allies brought him up as a potential successor. But it didn't work. In December, Trump nominated State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert to replace Haley and Grenell instead remained in Berlin. There, though, he is politically

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ained early days in Berlin, he tried to justify his aggressive behavior. The German-American relationship, he supposedly said, is strong enough that it can handle a bit of excitement and disruption.

Too bad his friend Jens Spahn had already left. The conservative member of the CDU and high-profile Merkel critic had visited Washington only a short time before and his visit was one of the subjects being discussed at the party. The diplomats were surprised that the health minister had been received by Bolton in the White House.

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Grenell supposedly initiated the meeting with his old boss.

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arrange Spahn's visit with Bolton. Only an official inquiry from the German diplomats was able to secure the meeting Spahn so badly wanted, in the hopes it might help him in the CDU power struggle.

Spahn and Grenell have been highly public about their friendship. When the ambassador took up his duties in Berlin, Spahn's husband Daniel Funke, head of the Berlin offices of the gossip magazine *Bunte*, published a photo spread and story about Grenell and his partner Matt Lashey. The article quoted Grenell as saying that a bout of cancer in 2013 had brought him "closer to God" and that his dog helped him defeat the illness.

'Actually Really Nice'

"Lola could tell that I was sick when I came back home from chemotherapy and collapsed exhausted on the couch," *Bunte* quoted him as saying (*Eds note: Quotes from Bunte have been translated back into English from the German-language article*). "She would cuddle up to me and even licked my bald head. It may sound strange, but I think she wanted to lick away the chemo." The cancer, Grenell said, made him a "better man" and "gave me the strength to not care what others think about me."

Spahn is among the few important politicians in Berlin to stand up for Grenell. "He wins you over on second impression," he has said, according to other CDU members. "He's actually really nice."

And the ambassador stands ... Spahn. In November

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explained that a successor was ready and waiting. Who? Jens, of course. That, at least, is how the story was related.

When reached for comment by DER SPIEGEL, the U.S. Embassy denied that version of events. "Ambassador Grenell has never said a bad word about Minister von der Leyen -- ever. Neither in private nor in public. He likes her very much. This is complete nonsense and printing it is unworthy of real journalism."

Grenell is well-liked among the right-wing populist party Alternative for Germany. When he visited the Committee on the Affairs of the European Union in the German parliament last October, he was welcomed with applause by AfD members, and AfD parliamentarians posed for selfies with the ambassador at the Embassy's Fourth of July party in Berlin. Petr Bystron, a foreign policy specialist for the AfD, immediately posted his photo with Grenell on Twitter, along with the hashtag #conservative_revolution.

Consorting with the Right Wing

Embassy staff made it clear to the ambassador that it would be counterproductive to set up an official meeting with the AfD. But Grenell isn't shy about consorting with the right wing. In early September, he was a guest at an annual dinner held by the Achse des Guten, or Axis of Good, a blog run by the journalists Henryk M. Broder and Dirk Maxeiner that sees itself as a counterbalance to the allegedly left-wing mainstream media. It offers an intellectual home to Islamophobes, Merkel-haters and EU-skeptics.

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merkel and now supports the AfD.

Such appearances have not been well-received in political Berlin. In late October, he sent out invitations to a Halloween party at his residence in the tony neighborhood of Dahlem. The theme for the evening was "super heroes." Grenell invited several prominent Berlin political figures, but many politicians declined to attend.

One of the most prominent invitees who did choose to attend was Henryk M. Broder from the Axis of Good. He came dressed as a Muslim woman in a burka. **S**

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U.S. Ambassador to Germany Richard Grenell gets in his car after an accreditation ceremony for new ambassadors in Berlin on May 8.

Odd Andersen/AFP/Getty Images

Updated at 4 p.m. ET

Richard Grenell has been the U.S. ambassador to Germany for barely a month, but already politicians on both sides of the Atlantic are demanding he be recalled.

The uproar is over Grenell's recent comments on Twitter and the right-wing Breitbart news site in support of Europe's conservative politicians who he said are making gains against the political establishment. German and U.S. politicians charge that the remarks could amount to meddling in Germany's political affairs.

But some current and former State Department officials say Grenell didn't violate any rules.

"Ambassadors have a right to express their opinion. They're representatives of the White House, whether it's this administration or other administrations," U.S. State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in a news conference in Washington on Tuesday. "We hear them voicing their opinions and they're sometimes opinions people may or may not like."

John Kornblum, a former U.S. ambassador to Berlin during the Clinton administration, agreed. Contrary to what Grenell's critics claim, he says, there isn't a diplomatic handbook ambassadors go by.

Sponsor Message

"People are saying, 'Oh, he's breaking all of the rules of diplomacy,' " Kornblum told NPR. "Well, there essentially aren't any rules of diplomacy. What there are is a government or an ambassador's judgement as to what works and what doesn't work."

During a routine visit to Germany's Foreign Ministry on Wednesday, Grenell was asked to clarify remarks he made in an interview published over the weekend by Breitbart.

The right-wing news site quoted Grenell saying: "I absolutely want to empower other conservatives throughout Europe, other leaders. I think there is a groundswell of conservative policies that are taking hold."

He added, "The election of Donald Trump has empowered individuals and people to say that they can't just allow the political class to determine before an election takes place, who's going to win and who should run."

EUROPE

Austria's Coalition Government Includes Party Linked To Ex-Nazis

LISTEN · 3:39

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Transcript

The U.S. ambassador also gushed over Austrian Chancellor Sebastian Kurz, calling him a "rock star." Kurz — who is critical of German Chancellor Angela Merkel — heads a right-wing government he formed with the Freedom Party of Austria, which has Nazi roots.

Under criticism, Grenell tweeted: "The idea that I'd endorse candidates/parties is ridiculous. I stand by my comments that we are experiencing an awakening from the silent majority - those who reject the elites & their bubble. Led by Trump."

But his decision to invite Kurz to dine at the U.S. Embassy next week during the Austrian leader's visit to Germany, as reported on Monday by German magazine Der Spiegel, irked many Germans, who wonder why the American ambassador assigned to Berlin was making overtures to a leader from another country. The U.S. Embassy described the planned meeting as a "common initiative" but declined further comment.

According to the German Foreign Ministry, State Secretary Andreas Michaelis told Grenell the fact Germans were upset over his comments showed the "high value that the German population attached to relations with the United States." The ministry added the American diplomat was "unhappy about the reactions his interview had triggered."

"In particular, he did not want to be perceived as the partisan of right-wing forces in Germany," the ministry statement said, adding Grenell "also wanted to create the conditions for a close and trusting cooperation with German partners."

That may be wishful thinking, given the impression many Germans have of the new American ambassador to Berlin, a post left vacant for nearly 16 months because of delays in the White House appointing and the Senate confirming staff.

Already on Grenell's first day, the 51-year-old diplomat who is a cancer survivor, former Fox commentator and served as spokesman of the U.S. mission to the United Nations under George W. Bush, managed to ruffle German feathers by tweeting that German companies should stop doing business with Iran following the U.S. pullout from the Iran nuclear deal.



PARALLELS

New U.S. Ambassador To Germany Grenell Irks His Hosts The Day He Arrives

And so a reporter on public broadcaster ARD recently quipped while showing footage of Grenell: "Is he smiling or baring his teeth?"

The U.S. Embassy declined to comment about the German reaction and Grenell has declined repeated NPR requests for interviews.

During a May 31 interview with KCRW Berlin, Grenell described himself as a "consistent conservative."

"A consistent conservative is probably an inconsistent defined political person," Grenell said. "So I'm very comfortable with my positions. I don't feel that I'm inconsistent, but from a purely partisan political criteria, I'm very inconsistent."

Some national politicians chose different monikers for him.

"It's somewhat like the colony's new master has arrived to take up his post," Sahra Wagenknecht, a German lawmaker whose left-wing group includes members of a party that succeeded East Germany's ruling Communists, said in an interview with public broadcaster ZDF.

"No government can allow itself to be treated like that," added Wagenknecht, one of several German politicians who have publicly said they want Grenell gone.

Some Congress members in Washington criticized Grenell too.

Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, a Democrat from New Hampshire, said in a written statement on Monday: "If Ambassador Grenell is unwilling to refrain from political statements, he should be recalled immediately. The United States does not accept foreign meddling in our elections, and we shouldn't have an ambassador attempting to intrude in another country's political affairs."

On Thursday, Sen. Bob Menendez, D-N.J., called for a State Department investigation into the issue.



But German legislator Omid Nouripour, who heads the foreign policy committee in parliament for the Green party, told NPR that Grenell should be given another chance.

"I don't think that the U.S. ambassador of Germany should be expelled," he said. "But it's obvious that the way he's speaking these days is not the language we're used to from diplomats. And I hope this is because he's new in his job and I hope he learned from the mistakes he did."

Nouripour added he recently extended Grenell an invitation to meet with him and his left-leaning pro-environment parliamentary group. The German lawmaker said: "I will

try to [get] my own impression of him by inviting him for a meal with a non — non-establishment, non-conservative."

Former Ambassador Kornblum added that Grenell is hardly the first American diplomat to stir up trouble in Germany. He too was embroiled in controversy 19 years ago while establishing the new U.S. Embassy in Berlin. His insistence that German authorities change some of the roads around the site to enhance security sparked a backlash, he said.

Kornblum added Germans are even more sensitive nowadays.

"Europe is in the midst of a social-political upheaval which is very similar to that which is taking place in the United States, probably for more or less the same reasons," he explained.

"If an American ambassador who represents a disruptive president, who is proud to say he's a disruptive president, comes and says: 'I sense here that there are these trends in Europe' ... then some people are going to be upset and that is their perfect right."

richard grenell diplomacy germany

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Exhibit B

In the Matter of:

Richard Grenell

vs

Olivia Troye

Deposition of:

OLIVIA TROYE

August 21, 2023



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Olivia Troye
August 21, 2023

1

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V I R G I N I A

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

-----X

RICHARD GRENELL,

:

Plaintiff,

:

v.

: Case No. CL22-1907

OLIVIA TROYE,

:

Defendant.

:

-----X

Monday, August 21, 2023

Alexandria, Virginia

Video Deposition of:

OLIVIA TROYE,

the Defendant, called for examination by counsel for the Plaintiff, pursuant to notice and agreement, in the offices of Binnall Law Group, PLLC at 717 King Street, Suite 200, Alexandria, Virginia 22314, beginning at 10:08 a.m., before Linda Marie Kia, a Verbatim Court Reporter and Electronic Notary Public in and for the Commonwealth of Virginia at Large, when there were present on behalf of the respective parties:

Olivia Troye
August 21, 2023

2 to 5

<p>Page 2</p> <p>1 A P P E A R A N C E S</p> <p>2 For the Plaintiff:</p> <p>3 JASON C. GREAVES, ESQUIRE</p> <p>4 Binnall Law Group, PLLC</p> <p>5 717 King Street, Suite 200</p> <p>6 Alexandria, Virginia 22314</p> <p>7 (703) 888-1943</p> <p>8 jason@binnall.com</p> <p>9</p> <p>10 For the Defendant:</p> <p>11 THOMAS M. CRAIG, ESQUIRE</p> <p>12 FLUET</p> <p>13 1751 Pinnacle Drive, Suite 1000</p> <p>14 Tysons, Virginia 22102</p> <p>15 (703) 590-1234</p> <p>16 tcraig@fluet.law</p> <p>17 and</p> <p>18 MARK S. ZAID, ESQUIRE</p> <p>19 Mark S. Zaid, P.C.</p> <p>20 1250 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 700</p> <p>21 Washington, D.C. 20036</p> <p>22 (202) 330-5610</p> <p>Mark@MarkZaid.com</p> <p>Also Present:</p> <p>VYTAUTAS SKRIOPKAUSKAS</p> <p>Video Technician</p>	<p>Page 4</p> <p>1 E X H I B I T S</p> <p>2 PAGE</p> <p>3 TROYE DEPOSITION</p> <p>4 Exhibit 1</p> <p>5 4/8/2022 tweet</p> <p>6 Exhibit 2</p> <p>7 Answer</p> <p>8 Exhibit 3</p> <p>9 Objections/Initial Responses Request</p> <p>10 for Admissions</p> <p>11 Exhibit 4</p> <p>12 Objections and Initial Responses to</p> <p>13 Plaintiff's Request for Production of</p> <p>14 Documents</p> <p>15 Exhibit 5</p> <p>16 Responses and Objections to</p> <p>17 Plaintiff's First Interrogatories</p> <p>18 Exhibit 6</p> <p>19 Responses to the Second Set of</p> <p>20 Interrogatories</p> <p>21 Exhibit 7</p> <p>22 Second Revised Responses and</p> <p>Objections to the First Interrogatories</p> <p>Exhibit 8</p> <p>2/1/2022 tweet</p> <p>Exhibit 9</p> <p>9/3/2021 tweet</p> <p>Exhibit 10</p> <p>8/12/2022 tweet</p> <p>Exhibit 11</p> <p>8/4/2022 tweet</p>
<p>Page 3</p> <p>1 C O N T E N T S</p> <p>2 WITNESS</p> <p>3 Olivia Troye</p> <p>4 Examination by Mr. Greaves</p> <p>5</p> <p>6</p> <p>7</p> <p>8</p> <p>9</p> <p>10</p> <p>11</p> <p>12</p> <p>13</p> <p>14</p> <p>15</p> <p>16</p> <p>17</p> <p>18</p> <p>19</p> <p>20</p> <p>21</p> <p>22</p>	<p>Page 5</p> <p>1 E X H I B I T S</p> <p>2 PAGE</p> <p>3 TROYE DEPOSITION</p> <p>4 Exhibit 12</p> <p>5 2/13/2021 tweet</p> <p>6 Exhibit 13</p> <p>7 6/6/2021 tweet</p> <p>8 Exhibit 14</p> <p>9 9/30/2020 tweet</p> <p>10 Exhibit 15</p> <p>11 1/6/2021 tweet</p> <p>12 Exhibit 16</p> <p>13 1/19/2021 tweet</p> <p>14 Exhibit 17</p> <p>15 (not marked)</p> <p>16 Exhibit 18</p> <p>17 Prism Metanews exchange</p> <p>18 Exhibit 19</p> <p>19 5/26/2021 text between Troye and</p> <p>20 Dobitsch</p> <p>21 Exhibit 20</p> <p>22 Emails between Troye and Cowan</p> <p>Exhibit 21</p> <p>Excerpts from AmCham Germany's</p> <p>2019 Annual Report</p> <p>Exhibit 22</p> <p>Exchange between Troye and Wilson</p> <p>Exhibit 23</p> <p>Exchange between Troye and Stein</p>

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66 to 69

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 66</p> <p>1 meetings or in any of the National Security Council</p> <p>2 meetings. He was not the rep for DNI there at the</p> <p>3 time.</p> <p>4 Q During his tenure as U.S. Ambassador to</p> <p>5 Germany, he had taken a lot of criticism for being</p> <p>6 a -- a somewhat blunt America-first ambassador.</p> <p>7 What were your feelings about that?</p> <p>8 A I do remember that. I thought it was</p> <p>9 terrible.</p> <p>10 Q And you were also aware during your time</p> <p>11 working at the White House that Ric Grenell was</p> <p>12 openly gay; correct?</p> <p>13 A Actually, not the entire time. I think</p> <p>14 sometime along the way I remember hearing that.</p> <p>15 Q Do you remember when you learned that?</p> <p>16 A I don't recall. It --</p> <p>17 Q Was it --</p> <p>18 A -- really -- didn't really stand out to</p> <p>19 me.</p> <p>20 Q Was it something you learned before</p> <p>21 hearing about the 2019 Munich Security Conference</p> <p>22 issues?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 68</p> <p>1 during that time.</p> <p>2 Q Well, are you aware that the Nazis</p> <p>3 executed gays in concentration camps?</p> <p>4 A Yes, and many others.</p> <p>5 Q Knowing that, you still chose to publicly</p> <p>6 state I do in response to a question about whether</p> <p>7 someone has proof that Ric Grenell hung out with</p> <p>8 Nazis when he was Ambassador to Germany; right?</p> <p>9 A That is correct, based on the statement</p> <p>10 that I made after in that tweet, yes.</p> <p>11 Q Knowing that, you still chose to publicly</p> <p>12 accuse Ric Grenell of attempting to get Vice</p> <p>13 President Pence to attend a white supremacist</p> <p>14 gathering?</p> <p>15 A I was not accusing him. It was what was</p> <p>16 commonly known and what was said to me in relation</p> <p>17 to this event that happened on that trip and some of</p> <p>18 his more extremist, far right stances.</p> <p>19 Q You were making that statement as that was</p> <p>20 the proof that you were providing in response to</p> <p>21 that tweet exchange between Ted Lieu and -- and --</p> <p>22 A Eric Swalwell.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 67</p> <p>1 A I don't -- I don't recall.</p> <p>2 Q So at that time, you weren't aware that he</p> <p>3 was the first openly gay senior Cabinet official?</p> <p>4 A I do -- I do actually remember that. I</p> <p>5 think I remember seeing a headliner, reading about</p> <p>6 it somewhere. Again, I wasn't tracking all of Ric</p> <p>7 Grenell's movements. I had a full plate.</p> <p>8 Q As a person in a senior role in the White</p> <p>9 House, that is a piece of knowledge that you have?</p> <p>10 A Yes.</p> <p>11 Q In fact, he has been fairly open about</p> <p>12 that in the press?</p> <p>13 A Yes, I -- I guess so. I don't -- again, I</p> <p>14 don't track everything that he says, but good for</p> <p>15 him; glad that he's doing that.</p> <p>16 Q Are you aware of the -- the origins of the</p> <p>17 upside down pink triangle symbol?</p> <p>18 A No.</p> <p>19 Q You're not aware that this was a badge</p> <p>20 used by the Nazis in Germany to designate</p> <p>21 homosexuals in the concentration camps?</p> <p>22 A No. I don't know all of the symbols</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 69</p> <p>1 Q Eric Swalwell, yes. That was the proof</p> <p>2 that he hung out with Nazis is this supposed meeting</p> <p>3 with white supremacists?</p> <p>4 A That is what my responses is based on,</p> <p>5 yes, was based on those conversations that I had.</p> <p>6 Q And that was the only basis for asserting</p> <p>7 that you had proof of Ric Grenell associating with</p> <p>8 Nazis?</p> <p>9 A I wrote the tweet, yes, that's what I was</p> <p>10 thinking about.</p> <p>11 Q And just be clear, you didn't have any</p> <p>12 other basis to suggest that Ric Grenell hung out</p> <p>13 with Nazis other than that supposed meeting?</p> <p>14 A I -- I mean, I believe that he has</p> <p>15 publicly stated support for more far right leaning</p> <p>16 groups, expressed regrets for not meeting, I</p> <p>17 believe, with the AFD in Germany when he was</p> <p>18 Ambassador there. So I think these are incidents</p> <p>19 where I question some of his actions.</p> <p>20 But in relation to that tweet, that's what</p> <p>21 I was thinking about, was the conversations where</p> <p>22 people were aware of this situation that developed</p>

Olivia Troye
August 21, 2023

70 to 73

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 70</p> <p>1 on the Vice President's trip.</p> <p>2 Q So when you say that Ric Grenell has made,</p> <p>3 you know, I think you said, extreme statements, what</p> <p>4 extreme statements are you referring to?</p> <p>5 A In my opinion, they tend to be more</p> <p>6 supportive of more, like, far right positions.</p> <p>7 Q Far right, what does that mean?</p> <p>8 A More extreme views, viewpoints.</p> <p>9 Q And does that to you equate to Nazism?</p> <p>10 A I think in terms of what these groups</p> <p>11 ascribe to in terms of totalitarian, supremacy</p> <p>12 ideologies and philosophies, I do think -- in modern</p> <p>13 times especially, I think that these are -- they are</p> <p>14 somewhat related.</p> <p>15 Q Now, let's go back to Exhibit 2.</p> <p>16 Now, in -- this is your answer to the</p> <p>17 complaint. If you go to the back, your affirmative</p> <p>18 defenses and specifically affirmative defense number</p> <p>19 3 on page 7. Your claiming as a defense hear that</p> <p>20 your statement was true; correct?</p> <p>21 A Correct.</p> <p>22 Q And so you stand by your tweet as being</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 72</p> <p>1 denied.</p> <p>2 Sitting here today, what Nazis or</p> <p>3 neo-Nazis can you name that Richard Grenell</p> <p>4 associates with?</p> <p>5 A I don't know.</p> <p>6 Q So the response here should be admitted,</p> <p>7 you cannot identify or name a single Nazi or</p> <p>8 neo-Nazi with whom Richard Grenell supposedly used</p> <p>9 to hang out with?</p> <p>10 MR. CRAIG: I'm going object to that</p> <p>11 question. Jason, you're mischaracterizing her</p> <p>12 response. But go ahead and answer.</p> <p>13 THE WITNESS: No, because in my tweet I'm</p> <p>14 responding to the characterization of far right</p> <p>15 white supremacy, Nazism all being part of a similar</p> <p>16 philosophy. So that is how I was interpreting that</p> <p>17 tweet.</p> <p>18 BY MR. GREAVES:</p> <p>19 Q Well, that's not what the question asks.</p> <p>20 It asks you to identify or name a single Nazi or</p> <p>21 neo-Nazi whom Richard Grenell supposedly used to</p> <p>22 hang out with that. Can you or can you not identify</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 71</p> <p>1 true?</p> <p>2 A Yes.</p> <p>3 Q And the 15th affirmative defense on page</p> <p>4 9, you're asserting a privilege. What privilege are</p> <p>5 you asserting in this case to make a defamatory</p> <p>6 statement?</p> <p>7 A I need to go back and -- sorry, I'm</p> <p>8 reading through the context of it, just looking at</p> <p>9 it, I'm trying to refresh my memory.</p> <p>10 (Reviewing document.)</p> <p>11 I don't know. I would need clarification</p> <p>12 on --</p> <p>13 Q That's fine if you don't know.</p> <p>14 A -- with my attorneys on it. Honestly,</p> <p>15 like I -- it's a lot of legalese, so --</p> <p>16 Q If we go to Exhibit 3, your response to</p> <p>17 request for admission.</p> <p>18 A Okay. Thanks.</p> <p>19 Q The third request for admission was, on</p> <p>20 page 2, admit you cannot identify or name a single</p> <p>21 Nazi or neo-Nazi whom Richard Grenell, quote,</p> <p>22 unquote, used to hang out. And your response is</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 73</p> <p>1 such an individual?</p> <p>2 A I don't -- I don't honestly recall.</p> <p>3 Q You don't -- I'm asking for your</p> <p>4 recollection. I'm asking you sitting here today.</p> <p>5 A I would not know. I would have -- I mean,</p> <p>6 I don't know if he has appeared publicly with</p> <p>7 neo-Nazis or white supremacists really. I believe</p> <p>8 he has been on appearances, but I don't recall all</p> <p>9 the names of who he has associated with. I don't</p> <p>10 know, perhaps he has appeared with Nick Fuentes,</p> <p>11 people like that. I don't know.</p> <p>12 Q You -- you don't know?</p> <p>13 A I don't -- again, I don't track all of Ric</p> <p>14 Grenell's friends and associates.</p> <p>15 Q So what's your basis for denying this</p> <p>16 admission?</p> <p>17 A Because I was responding to my tweet.</p> <p>18 Q But this has nothing to do with your</p> <p>19 tweet. The question is -- so the question --</p> <p>20 A Well, then what does it have to do with</p> <p>21 it if it's used to hang out with --</p> <p>22 Q Admit -- you cannot identify or name a</p>

Olivia Troye
August 21, 2023

90 to 93

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 90</p> <p>1 A I'm sorry, can you clarify the question?</p> <p>2 Q Well, in your response you said, she said</p> <p>3 something to the effect of: Oh, and get this, Ric</p> <p>4 Grenell tried to get Pence to go on -- meet with</p> <p>5 Nazis.</p> <p>6 Were those her words or weren't those her</p> <p>7 words?</p> <p>8 A I do remember her walking in and that was</p> <p>9 her statement. I do remember she said he tried to</p> <p>10 get Pence to meet with Nazis. And which I was</p> <p>11 shocked.</p> <p>12 Q And you didn't ask any follow-up</p> <p>13 questions, though, about who these Nazis were?</p> <p>14 A I -- I think -- I believe that I was more</p> <p>15 concerned on whether Pence actually attended the</p> <p>16 gathering, so I asked if he -- what happened, did</p> <p>17 Pence go.</p> <p>18 Q What was the answer?</p> <p>19 A No, he did not.</p> <p>20 Q And what was your understanding of the</p> <p>21 reason he didn't go?</p> <p>22 A I didn't discuss that with her. I was</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 92</p> <p>1 I -- I -- you know, we're a team. We lean on each</p> <p>2 other. So I think she was just expressing sympathy</p> <p>3 that it was part of what Gabrielle had to deal with</p> <p>4 during the trip.</p> <p>5 But it's, you know, my understanding,</p> <p>6 like, on a trip like that, the staff works very</p> <p>7 closely on most events or you kind of lean on each</p> <p>8 other, depending on it, coordinate with each other.</p> <p>9 Q During that conversation or in any</p> <p>10 conversation since then, has Stephanie Dobitsch ever</p> <p>11 told you what the supposed meeting was?</p> <p>12 A No, not that I can recall. I, more</p> <p>13 recently, asked her if she could recall.</p> <p>14 Q And what did she respond?</p> <p>15 A She said I -- she remembered that it</p> <p>16 happened. She remembered the event and she said</p> <p>17 Gabrielle would likely know more because she was the</p> <p>18 Europe advisor and she was -- like, she was on the</p> <p>19 trip, she probably remembers exactly what it was.</p> <p>20 Q So Stephanie Dobitsch didn't remember the</p> <p>21 event, but she said that Gabrielle Cowan likely</p> <p>22 would?</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 91</p> <p>1 just relieved that he didn't.</p> <p>2 Q Again, you didn't ask her anything about</p> <p>3 what type of meeting this was?</p> <p>4 A No.</p> <p>5 Q In a country where Nazism is actually</p> <p>6 illegal and where our U.S. Ambassador, who</p> <p>7 supposedly tried to arrange a meeting with Nazis, is</p> <p>8 openly gay, you took that statement at face value?</p> <p>9 A Yes. I had no reason to doubt Stephanie</p> <p>10 Dobitsch. And when we were -- you know, when</p> <p>11 working in the Trump Administration, Trump often</p> <p>12 brought extremist groups into the White House.</p> <p>13 Again, based on these extremists' similar</p> <p>14 philosophies. So I took that as a broad paintbrush</p> <p>15 of what she meant; interpreting a far right white</p> <p>16 supremacist, Nazi-leaning ideology group, is how I</p> <p>17 interpreted that.</p> <p>18 Q She told you poor Gabrielle had to deal</p> <p>19 with all of that. So is that meaning that Stephanie</p> <p>20 didn't actually deal with that; it was Gabrielle</p> <p>21 Cowan who actually dealt with that?</p> <p>22 A I don't know what she meant for that.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 93</p> <p>1 A To me at the time. This was more -- more</p> <p>2 recently when I was trying to respond to your</p> <p>3 questions.</p> <p>4 Q And when did you speak with her; do you</p> <p>5 know?</p> <p>6 A I don't recall. I'd have to look if it's</p> <p>7 based on whenever this was submitted because I was</p> <p>8 trying to get you the information. It would be</p> <p>9 then.</p> <p>10 Q So these were --</p> <p>11 A It has been a while.</p> <p>12 Q -- certified on February 15th of 2023. It</p> <p>13 would have been before that date?</p> <p>14 A I honestly -- I don't recall exactly, but,</p> <p>15 correct, it would have been in the lead up to this.</p> <p>16 Q Okay. Have you spoken to Stephanie</p> <p>17 Dobitsch since responding to these discovery</p> <p>18 response -- questions?</p> <p>19 A I don't recall. I -- I don't believe so.</p> <p>20 Q And when you did speak with her, you know,</p> <p>21 in preparation for drafting these, did you speak</p> <p>22 with her over the phone?</p>

Exhibit C

Trump loyalist Kash Patel's tax-exempt charity raises questions, experts say

Patel has been raising money for a charity he founded called "Fight With Kash."

By [Mike Levine](#)

March 8, 2023, 4:17 AM

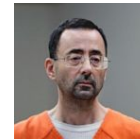


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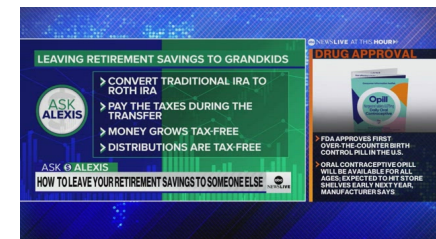


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Over the past year, one of [Donald Trump's](#) staunchest loyalists, a rising star on the right named Kash Patel, has been soliciting donations and raising money for "Fight With Kash," a charity he launched after leaving the Trump administration two years ago.

The charity, which in July of last year became a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization, made national headlines this past week with revelations that it provided thousands of dollars to at least two so-called "FBI whistleblowers" who are helping House Republicans push disputed claims of [politically-fueled corruption](#) inside the Justice Department.

The revelations surfaced as Patel was set to speak just outside Washington, D.C., at this year's Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC), a mass gathering of largely pro-Trump conservatives that lists "Fight With Kash" as among its event sponsors.

MORE: Trump will stay in race even if indicted, tells CPAC crowd: 'I am your retribution'



"This year we want to give away \$1 million," Patel said from CPAC's main stage on Friday.

But Patel, who recently touted the charity's "thousands and thousands of donors," has so far offered few details about how it actually spends its money or how it decides who to help.

Instead, through media interviews and other public forums, he and his charity have offered vague assertions and inconsistent claims about what it's doing.

Patel has said "the whole point" of his charity is "helping other people" in need, but he has also said its work is, at least in part, about bringing "America First patriots" together and "helping fight the Deep State."



Loni Anderson Turned 96 - Take A Deep Breath Before You See Her

Ad Definition



Kash Patel and the "Fight With Kash" logo are seen on the charity's "donate" page at WinRed.com, as captured on Feb. 24, 2023.

ABC News

He has said his charity is willing to consider assisting "anyone" -- "It's not just a mission for X or Y" -- but he has also described the money it raises as "for our friends in need," "for those on the right," and -- as he told the CPAC crowd on Friday -- to "help people like ... you all here today."

At the same time, Patel has repeatedly promoted his self-branded website, FightWithKash.com, as his 501(c)(3) organization, even though that website claims to be funded by a private trust preceding the tax-exempt offshoot.

With an unmistakable pro-Trump tilt, the website features what Patel has called a "vault" of documents relating to controversial matters like "Russiagate" and the Jan. 6, 2021, [attack on the U.S. Capitol](#) -- documents that Patel said further the "educational component" of his charity.

But the website also prominently plugs books that, according to Patel, serve as significant sources of personal income for him. And it features hundreds of videos of him, including clips

from when he's endorsed certain political candidates.

Federal law prohibits tax-exempt organizations from engaging in "political intervention" or providing "private benefit" to insiders, so if that website is operating as part of his 501(c)(3) organization, then those parts of the website could raise legal questions, according to three nonprofit law experts who spoke with ABC News.

"There are definitely a number of [potential] issues," said Lloyd Mayer, a law professor at Notre Dame University who specializes in nonprofit organizations.

'If Trump's back in, I'm back in'

According to Patel, who recently found himself entangled in the ongoing federal probe into Trump's [handling of classified documents](#), he started his charity hoping to "take a little bit of my infamy" and "put it to good use."

In 2017 and 2018, while serving as a senior Republican staffer in Congress, Patel helped lead the House probe of "Russiagate," through which he claimed to have uncovered a "Deep State" inside the U.S. government that targeted Trump with a federal investigation into his alleged ties to Russia.

Patel joined the Trump administration in 2019, and in the final year of Trump's presidency, he was appointed acting deputy director of national intelligence -- the second-in-command of the entire U.S. intelligence community -- and then chief of staff to the acting U.S. defense secretary, a position critics claimed he was unqualified to hold.

Last year, Trump appointed Patel as one of his official representatives to the National Archives. Then, when the Justice Department's investigation of Trump's handling of classified documents at Mar-a-Lago became public, Patel claimed Trump declassified large batches of documents before leaving office -- a claim that reportedly landed Patel [before the federal grand jury](#) investigating the matter.

Patel now serves as a key political adviser to Trump, and he has become such a popular voice for Trump's agenda that Trump's former adviser Roger Stone recently said he named his dog "Kash" as an "homage" to Patel.

Since Trump formally announced his reelection bid in November, Patel has been mentioned on right-wing media as a potential contender for attorney general or CIA director. "If Trump's back in, I'm back in," Patel, a former federal prosecutor and senior intelligence official, said in a December interview.

Patel declined to speak with ABC News for this story.

'Pushing the envelope'?

When Patel first launched a charity in 2021, he called it the "Kash Patel Legal Offense Trust," vowing to "bring the fake news media to their knees" by funding lawsuits on behalf of the "everyday Americans" across the country who have been "defamed."

That mission now continues with the 501(c)(3) organization, as Patel claims "the biggest threat to our democracy is the fake news mafia."

"We have funded multiple defamation lawsuits for those on the right who have been defamed," he said in another December interview.

But at CPAC on Friday, a member of the charity's board, Trump-linked attorney Jesse Binnall, acknowledged to ABC News that the charity has so far funded only two filed lawsuits: the most recent for Ric Grenell, one of Patel's "great friends" who served as his boss in the Trump administration, and another case on behalf of Daniel Bostic, a "Stop the Steal" activist who helped produce a 2020 film -- featuring Patel -- about the alleged "Deep State."



Kash Patel at the 2023 Conservative Political Action Conference in Washington DC, March 3, 2023.
Zach D Roberts/Associated Press

Grenell's lawsuit was filed by Binnall, targeting a former aide to former Vice President Mike Pence for statements she allegedly posted about him online. Bostic's lawsuit, filed by another attorney at Binnall's law firm, went after a small, Texas-based media company for alleging that Bostic helped organize the Jan. 6 riot -- something Bostic vehemently denies. Both cases are still pending.

Mayer, the law professor, expressed skepticism that funding high-dollar defamation lawsuits even serves a public interest, saying it's "pushing the envelope of what qualifies" as a charitable endeavor, in part because many lawyers are willing to bring defamation cases based on a "contingency fee," when alleged victims only have to pay if their case wins.

Years ago, Patel filed his own defamation lawsuits against the New York Times, CNN and Politico, reportedly seeking more than \$120 million in damages. The news organizations have denied the allegations, and the suits are still pending.

It's unclear how Patel has paid for those lawsuits. His lawyer in those cases did not respond to an email asking if Patel might be using a contingency-based lawyer himself, and a spokesperson for Patel declined to comment.

Helping who?

According to Patel, his charity has already given away at least \$100,000, and he has said it expects to boost that ten-fold this coming year.

While the charity is not legally obligated to divulge their identities, it "would likely be problematic" if it was determining "eligibility for its charitable programs based on political party affiliation or prior voting record," according to Erin Bradrick, a principal at the San-Francisco-based NEO Law Group, which advises tax-exempt organizations and other charities.

Many of the vague descriptions Patel has offered about who he's helping -- and pieces of information available elsewhere -- point to people who are somehow connected to support for Trump or criticism of the Biden administration.

"We have provided financial assistance to Jan. 6 families, and we have saved active-duty military members' careers by providing them with the legal defense funds they need so they can fight this arcane administration," he said in one of the December interviews.

In other interviews, he said the charity has "funded whistleblowers campaigns" with \$50,000 in "grants."

Patel hasn't offered any further information about those "whistleblowers," but House Democrats on Thursday issued a report identifying two of them as suspended FBI official Garret O'Boyle and former FBI agent Steve Friend, who the House Democrats said endorse "an alarming series of conspiracy theories related to the January 6 Capitol attack ... and the validity of the 2020 election."



Former Chief of Staff to the Department of Defense Kash Patel greets the crowd during a campaign rally at Minden-Tahoe Airport, Oct. 08, 2022 in Minden, Nevada.

Justin Sullivan/Getty Images, FILE

The report said both O'Boyle and Friend "received financial support from Patel," including a \$5,000 payment to Friend "almost immediately after they connected in November 2022."

In closed-door testimony before Congress, O'Boyle and Friend put forward a "wide range of personal opinions" and "hearsay" about how the FBI improperly conducted its Jan. 6-related investigations and subsequent arrests, but they provided no "firsthand knowledge" of wrongdoing, the report said.

"[They] are not, in fact, 'whistleblowers,'" even though Patel and others are promoting them as such to boost their own right-wing agenda and "advance Donald Trump's candidacy for President," the report alleged.

In a statement to ABC News, provided by his spokesperson, Patel said his charity has been helping "whistleblowers who provide credible information exposing government waste, fraud, and abuse."

In touting the charity's other work, Patel has also noted that it "bought 10 families \$1,000 Thanksgiving dinners" and similarly bought dinners for 20 more families this past Christmas.

He hasn't publicly identified any of those families, but in late December a Missouri woman identified herself on Truth Social, writing, "Wow! I just received a check from [Kash Patel] for \$1,000."

"I'm such a big fan that I wasn't sure if I should deposit it or frame it!" added the woman, who has previously posted online that "Trump won 2020," Biden is "a fraud," and the Democratic party is "a satanic cult."

MORE: Trump aide offered immunity to testify before grand jury about Mar-a-Lago docs: Sources →

A few weeks ago, Patel announced that "Fight With Kash" would be sending \$5,000 to pro-Trump personality Benny Johnson, who has vowed to help residents of East Palestine, Ohio, where a train derailment [released toxic chemicals](#) into the environment.

Patel made the pledge on an episode of Johnson's popular podcast, during which Johnson praised Trump's response to the disaster and insisted the "sick and vindictive" current U.S. president "hasn't lifted a finger" because, as Johnson put it, East Palestine is "Trump country," with more than 70 percent of voters in the area supporting Trump in the 2020 presidential election.

The White House defended its response in East Palestine, insisting the Biden administration took an "all hands on deck" approach "very early on," and that it will hold those responsible accountable.

In the statement provided by his spokesperson to ABC News, Patel said, "Fight With Kash will continue to assist veterans, law enforcement, education and other matters outlined in our Mission First approach."

The charity raises funds through donations and through the branded "Fight With Kash" apparel and other merchandise it sells online.

Donations are processed through WinRed, the self-described "secure payments technology designed to help GOP candidates and committees win across the U.S."

'A zero-tolerance rule'

At CPAC on Friday, Patel assured the audience, "[Trump] is going to be our 45th and 47th president of the United States." Minutes earlier, he clapped when one of his co-panelists similarly pushed for Trump's reelection in 2024.

What was different on Friday, though, was that Patel's charity helped sponsor the event, with Patel previewing beforehand that "Fight With Kash" -- "our 501(c)(3) foundation" -- would "have a massive crowd" at CPAC.

"All of that is inconsistent with being a 501(c)(3), and it puts the [tax] exemption at risk," according to Dan Kurtz, a partner with the New York-based law firm Pryor Cashman who represents nonprofit organizations.

While 501(c)(3) organizations are allowed to express political views, they "are absolutely prohibited from directly or indirectly participating" in "any political campaign," which includes a ban on making "public statements of position ... in favor of or in opposition to any candidate for public office," according to the IRS.



Two "Fight With Kash" associates stand at the charity's merchandise booth at the Conservative Political Action Conference on March 3, 2023. The charity shared the booth with its event co-sponsor, the Binnall Law Group.

ABC News

"CPAC is not itself a campaign, but it's sufficiently close [that] for a charity to sponsor it is pretty dubious," said Kurtz, who before becoming a private attorney led the New York attorney

Mayer said the fact that Patel didn't make clear on Friday that he was speaking at CPAC "as an individual," but then took time to promote the charity, creates "a gray area."

"Follow the money," Mayer suggested.

A 501(c)(3) charity can sponsor a political conference like CPAC, but the charity has to reach an agreement with the conference ensuring that any funds from it are used "for things that charities can do," Mayer said. And if any expenses associated with his appearance at CPAC were paid for by his charity, that would also create concerns, Mayer said.

The spokesperson for Patel declined to say if Patel's charity had reached any agreements with CPAC or paid for any expenses associated with the conference.

Mayer noted that the IRS has a "zero-tolerance rule" about "political intervention" -- a single infraction is enough to risk tax-exempt status.

'Everything I do there is a 501(c)(3)'

According to three of the experts who spoke with ABC News, the website Patel keeps touting as his 501(c)(3) organization could also raise potential legal concerns -- but those concerns largely depend on whether the claims he's made about his own charity are true.

"FightWithKash.com -- Fight with Kash with a 'K' dot-com -- is a 501(c)(3) charity," Patel said Monday on a podcast. "My life lives at FightWithKash.com," he said last month. "Everything I do there is a 501(c)(3)."

He has made near-identical statements at least 12 times in the past four months, and suggested it another dozen times.

But the website, launched the year before Patel's charity became a 501(c)(3), has a long-standing disclaimer on it saying it's "Paid For By Kash Patel Legal Offense Trust," the defamation-focused effort Patel launched in 2021.

If FightWithKash.com can't be attributed to the 501(c)(3), then the website may not be restricted by IRS rules.

But Mayer said that, with Patel publicly linking them so often, "It's hard to say, 'This is not our website' -- regardless of who's paying."

Kurtz agreed, saying the 501(c)(3) is "stuck with it."



Kash Patel and former U.S. President Donald Trump are seen on the homepage of FightWithKash.com, as captured on Feb. 24, 2023.
ABC News

When visitors first land on FightWithKash.com, a large advertisement overtakes nearly the entire window, encouraging visitors to buy an upcoming book Patel wrote about "the Deep State" and "how we can defeat" it. The same space previously pitched two other books by Patel: a children's book described as "Russiagate for kids," and another children's book about how "King Donald" lost his throne to "mischief" and faulty vote counts.

The books are plugged in videos and links throughout the website. And Patel has publicly acknowledged that selling those books is "how I make a living these days."

But the IRS generally prohibits a 501(c)(3) charity's resources from being used for substantial personal financial gain, raising potential "private benefit" concerns if FightWithKash.com is indeed tied to the 501(c)(3), according to Mayer and Bradrick.

Zac Kester, head of the nonprofit legal aid firm Charitable Allies, was skeptical of such concerns, saying he didn't see anything "inherently problematic" because the books are part of Patel's brand, and any "private benefit" would be "incidental" to the charity's education-oriented missions.

Elsewhere on the website, ahead of the midterm elections in November, FightWithKash.com posted clips of Patel speaking at a Republican candidate's campaign event and at Trump's "Save America" rally in Arizona -- "You need to send" the "whole slate" of Trump-backed candidates to victory, he said at the October rally, naming each of the candidates he supported.

Mayer and Kurtz said that if FightWithKash.com is actually part of the 501(c)(3) charity, such videos could raise potential "political intervention" concerns. But Kester reiterated that he didn't see anything "inherently wrong" with them, especially because, in his view, a brief comment in a much-longer video "doesn't become the message of the charity."

Last month, the charity launched a new website, TheKashFoundation.com, reflecting the 501(c)(3) organization's official name as registered with the IRS. And in interviews Patel has sometimes referred to the charity as "The Kash Foundation," or even the "Fight With Kash Foundation." But Patel has scarcely mentioned the new website since it first went online.

Some clarity about the 501(c)(3) organization more broadly might come later this year, when the charity is expected to file annual forms with the IRS. According to Mayer, the information submitted may be "pretty broad and vague," but the charity will have to provide specific numbers about revenues and expenses.

Regardless, both Mayer and Kurtz said that even if Patel's charity was found to be violating rules around its tax-exempt status, there's a practical reality: The IRS is unlikely to take any action in such a case, they said.

The IRS is "very wary going after groups that are political, particularly conservative ... because they get accused of being partisan even when they aren't," Mayer said.



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Exhibit D

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

RICHARD GRENELL,

Plaintiff,

v.

Case No.: CL22001907

OLIVIA TROYE,

Defendant.

**PLAINTIFF GRENELL'S OBJECTIONS AND RESPONSES TO
DEFENDANT TROYE'S SECOND SET OF INTERROGATORIES**

Plaintiff Richard Grenell, by counsel, states the following for his objections and responses to Defendant Olivia Troye's Second Set of Interrogatories.

INTERROGATORIES

INTERROGATORY NO. 24: Identify all donations or contributions made directly to you, or paid to your attorneys, or made through a donation platform such as GoFundMe, regarding, or in any way relating to, this lawsuit. Include a list of names who have donated, how they donated (whether to you or to your attorneys or by a platform), and the total amount raised.

OBJECTION: Mr. Grenell objects as this Interrogatory is irrelevant and not reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence.

ANSWER: A payment of \$7,500 was made from the Kash Patel Legal Offense Trust directly to my attorneys.

Dated: August 3, 2023

RICHARD GRENELL
By Counsel

BINNALL LAW GROUP, PLLC

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Counsel for Plaintiff

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on August 3, 2023, a true and correct copy of the foregoing
was served by U.S. First Class mail and electronic mail, to:

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Counsel for Plaintiff

Exhibit E



MIRANDA DEVINE

OPINION

Ex-House 'Russiagate' investigator Kash Patel sues Politico over impeachment lies

By **Miranda Devine**

Published March 22, 2023

Updated March 22, 2023 1:53 p.m. ET

SECTIONS

NEW YORK POST

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Ban private jets that aren't carrying my celeb pals, drown...



Making excuses
Nazi, Soviet-like
support for Jama



Former Trump administration official Kash Patel has filed a defamation lawsuit against Politico over claims that he misrepresented himself as a Ukraine expert to then-President Donald Trump.

Mark Peterson/Redux for NY Post

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MIRANDA DEVINE

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Pro-Joe Biden bias is algorithm-deep: Google's search-&-destroy agenda

New revelations about Bidens include China payments, Delaware coverup

'Missing witness' in Biden corruption probe offers dirt on

Watch out, Adam Schiff, Alexander Vinman, Fiona Hill and assorted other Russia/Ukraine hoaxers. Kash Patel is coming for you in a courtroom in Virginia.

The former Russiagate investigator for the House Intelligence Committee has filed a \$23 million defamation action against Politico for falsely claiming he misrepresented himself as a Ukraine expert and fed lies to Donald Trump about Ukraine — which ultimately led to the **then-president's impeachment**.

Patel's suit contends that Politico knew that Schiff, then chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, was "a wholly unreliable source," a "congenital liar and inveterate leaker [and] a demagogue with an axe to grind against President Trump [and] Kash."

Hill and Vindman, former NSC officials-turned-star impeachment witnesses, helped push Schiff's lie that Patel was Trump's "Ukraine whisperer," the suit alleges.

Also in Patel's firing, Hill's boss, his Democratic colleague Eric Swalwell, his "whistleblower" Eric Ciaramella, Hill's boss, former national security adviser John Bolton, and the author of the Politico article, Natasha Bertrand, who also laundered the CIA's Big Lie in October 2020 that the **New York Post's Hunter Biden laptop story was Russian disinformation.**

The lawsuit in Henrico Circuit Court will soon net juicy discovery from some of the prime culprits in the sabotage of Trump's presidency.

ADVERTISEMENT

"Victory here is not the end result," says Patel. "It is to expose the fraudulent reporting by so many in the mainstream media and the only way to do that is expose their corrupt sources and that is what the judge has granted us permission to do."

49

What do you think? [Post a comment.](#)

"I don't care about the money. But everything we receive in discovery will be made public."

Popcorn time.

Exhibit F

Team

Kash P. Patel, Esq.

President & Board Member

Mr. Patel served as the Chief of Staff to the Department of Defense (DOD), where his responsibilities included implementing the Secretary's mission using our 3 million plus employees, operating a \$740 billion budget, and \$2 trillion in assets...[READ MORE]

Jesse Binnall

Board Member

Jesse R. Binnall the Founder and CEO of Binnall Law Group, and is an experienced litigator whose work goes well beyond handling complicated federal civil and criminal litigation in courts throughout the country...[READ MORE]

Andrew Ollis

Vice President & Board Member

Originally from Fort Wayne, Indiana, Andrew is the Founder and CEO of Believe Media, and a digital marketing expert...[READ MORE]

William A. Onofry, Esq.

Board Member

Bill has experience in real estate and business. He's owned, re-developed, and managed real estate throughout the Tri-State Area. On the business side he's acquired interests, formed, and grown entities involved in niche automobile markets. Using New York lien laws, one business assists garagemen, tow companies, and parking lots get paid...[READ MORE]



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Exhibit G



Transcript of **Richard Grenell**

Monday, July 17, 2023

Richard Grenell v. Olivia Troye

www.TP.One
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www.accutracer.com
800.FOR.DEPO (800.367.3376)
Scheduling@TP.One

Reference Number: 130751

1 VIRGINIA:

2 IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

3 - - - - - X

4 RICHARD GRENELL, :

5 Plaintiff, :

6 v. : Case No.

7 OLIVIA TROYE, : CL22001907

8 Defendant. :

9 - - - - - X

10 Monday, July 17, 2023

11 Videoconference Deposition of RICHARD
12 GRENELL, Plaintiff herein, called for examination by
13 counsel for Defendant in the above-entitled matter,
14 pursuant to notice, the witness being duly sworn by
15 Desirae S. Jura, a Notary Public in and for the
16 Commonwealth of Virginia, held at 1751 Pinnacle
17 Drive, Suite 1000, Tysons, Virginia at 9:01 a.m., ET,
18 Monday, July 17, 2023, and the proceedings being
19 taken down by Stenotype by Desirae S. Jura, RPR, and
20 transcribed under her direction.

21

22

Page 2	Page 4
1 APPEARANCES:	1 C O N T E N T S
2	2 WITNESS EXAMINATION BY COUNSEL FOR
3 On behalf of the Plaintiff:	3 RICHARD GRENELL DEFENDANT
4 JESSE BINNALL, ESQ.	4 BY MR. ZAID 9
5 JASON GREAVES, ESQ.	5
6 BINNALL LAW GROUP, PLLC	6 E X H I B I T S
7 717 King Street, Suite 200	7 GRENELL EXHIBIT NO. PAGE
8 Alexandria, Virginia 22314	8 1 - Notice of Deposition 12
9 (703) 888-1930	9 2 - Notice of Deposition 15
10 jesse@binnall.com	10 3 - Executive Branch Personnel Public
11 jason@binnall.com	11 Financial Disclosure Report
12	12 (OGE Form 278e) 17
13 On behalf of the Defendant:	13 4 - Cover Sheet for Filing Actions,
14 MARK S. ZAID, ESQ. (pro hac vice)	14 Complaint 30
15 MARK S. ZAID, P.C.	15 5 - The Washington Post article, dated
16 1250 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.	16 August 24, 2020, "The absurd claim
17 Washington, DC 20036	17 that Trump is the 'most pro-gay
18 (202) 498-0011	18 President in American history" 48
19 Mark@MarkZaid.com	19 6 - Defendant Olivia Troye's Revised
20	20 Responses and Objections to
21	21 Plaintiff Richard Grenell's First
22	22 Interrogatories 53
Page 3	Page 5
1 APPEARANCES (cont.):	1 E X H I B I T S
2	2 GRENELL EXHIBIT NO. PAGE
3 On behalf of the Defendant (cont.):	3 7 - The Jewish Voice article dated
4 THOMAS M. CRAIG, ESQ.	4 12/23/2020, "Jewish Democratic
5 FLUET HUBER + HOANG	5 Leader Smears Richard Grenell as
6 1751 Pinnacle Drive	6 Nazi Supporter - Then Blocks
7 Suite 1000	7 Critics" 64
8 Tysons, Virginia 22102	8 8 - Breitbart article dated 3 Jun 2018,
9 (703) 590-1234	9 "Trump's Right Hand Man in Europe
10 tcraig@fhhfirm.com	10 Ric Grenell Wants to 'Empower'
11	11 European Conservatives" 67
12 ALSO PRESENT:	12 9 - SPIEGEL International article dated
13 CORA POTOTSKY, Paralegal	13 11.01.2019, "Trump's Ambassador
14 NORMAN REYNOLDS, Videographer	14 Finds Few Friends in Germany" 73
15 OLIVIA TROYE (telephonically)	15 10 - Vox article dated Jun 4, 2018,
16	16 "Trump's ambassador to Germany
17	17 talked to Breitbart - and started
18	18 an international incident" 73
19	19 11 - Plaintiff Grenell's Objections to
20	20 Defendant Troye's First Set of
21	21 Interrogatories 83
22	22

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 54</p> <p>1 have you reviewed this document before?</p> <p>2 A. I am sure I have. I don't remember.</p> <p>3 Q. Okay. So if I turn your attention to</p> <p>4 pages 3, 4, and 5, that is Ms. Troye's response to</p> <p>5 identify those who basically have served as the</p> <p>6 source of her knowledge.</p> <p>7 Now, I asked you some of those names that</p> <p>8 are referenced in here, which other than Alyssa</p> <p>9 Griffin, you had indicated you did not know. So I</p> <p>10 won't ask you about those individuals.</p> <p>11 At least based on the description that is</p> <p>12 set forth in here, the impression that this conveys</p> <p>13 is that something happened while the Vice President</p> <p>14 either before or coming over to visit Germany. To</p> <p>15 the best of your recollection, was there any issue</p> <p>16 that you had with your staff or the Vice President's</p> <p>17 about any event he was going to go to?</p> <p>18 MR. BINNALL: Objection to form. You can</p> <p>19 answer.</p> <p>20 THE WITNESS: So that seemed like a really</p> <p>21 general question of, was there anything that I said</p> <p>22 to the Vice President?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 56</p> <p>1 answer.</p> <p>2 THE WITNESS: So first of all, I never</p> <p>3 asked anybody to go to -- if that's the question. I</p> <p>4 never asked anyone to attend any white supremacist or</p> <p>5 Nazi event. But your question was, did Stephanie</p> <p>6 tell --</p> <p>7 MR. ZAID:</p> <p>8 Q. No, you wouldn't know that. So, no, I was</p> <p>9 just asking whether there was --</p> <p>10 A. So just --</p> <p>11 Q. -- some factual accuracy to her comment.</p> <p>12 MR. BINNALL: Let him finish his question.</p> <p>13 BY MR. ZAID:</p> <p>14 Q. That's okay. You answered it, exactly</p> <p>15 what I asked. There's an indication that Ms. Cowan</p> <p>16 was so furious she wanted to quit. Is there anything</p> <p>17 that you can recall with respect to Vice President</p> <p>18 Pence's trip to Germany that would have led someone</p> <p>19 to have that view?</p> <p>20 A. Nothing that I know of.</p> <p>21 Q. And Ms. Griffin supposedly said to</p> <p>22 Ms. Troye, there was -- no, strike that. Don't worry</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 55</p> <p>1 BY MR. ZAID:</p> <p>2 Q. No.</p> <p>3 A. What's your question?</p> <p>4 Q. Not that you said. To the best of your</p> <p>5 recollection, was there any type of conflict between</p> <p>6 you and your staff or you and the Vice President's</p> <p>7 staff about his itinerary?</p> <p>8 MR. BINNALL: Objection to form. You can</p> <p>9 answer.</p> <p>10 THE WITNESS: Nothing to my recollection,</p> <p>11 other than, we, at the embassy, wanted to see a</p> <p>12 chamber luncheon.</p> <p>13 BY MR. ZAID:</p> <p>14 Q. The one you talked about already?</p> <p>15 A. Yes.</p> <p>16 Q. So where it says on page 4 -- and some of</p> <p>17 it we've gone over, I just want to get it down, where</p> <p>18 it is indicated by Ms. Troye, not saying that this is</p> <p>19 true or accurate, this is what Ms. Troye says. That</p> <p>20 Stephanie told her that Ric and Al tried to get Pence</p> <p>21 to go to an event with Nazis. True or false?</p> <p>22 MR. BINNALL: Objection to form. You can</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p> <p>1 about it.</p> <p>2 Now, you talked about reputational damage.</p> <p>3 Have you lost any income because of Ms. Troye's</p> <p>4 tweets?</p> <p>5 A. How would I know? Nothing that I know.</p> <p>6 Q. Has anyone -- have you had any</p> <p>7 conversations with anyone, besides your lawyers and</p> <p>8 your partner, about Ms. Troye's tweets or tweet?</p> <p>9 A. Not that I can recall.</p> <p>10 Q. Did anyone from Affinity ever mention</p> <p>11 Ms. Troye's tweet to you?</p> <p>12 A. Never.</p> <p>13 Q. Did anyone from Exos ever mention</p> <p>14 Ms. Troye's tweet to you?</p> <p>15 A. Never.</p> <p>16 Q. Did anybody from Newsmax ever mention the</p> <p>17 Olivia Troye tweet to you?</p> <p>18 A. Not that I recall, although it might have</p> <p>19 been on Newsmax.</p> <p>20 Q. From the --</p> <p>21 A. Her tweet from the original tweet.</p> <p>22 Q. Okay. The two national political</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 62</p> <p>1 business or income loss that you've suffered because 2 of Ms. Troye's tweet?</p> <p>3 MR. BINNALL: Objection to form. You can 4 answer.</p> <p>5 THE WITNESS: Yeah, nothing that I can 6 say, that I know.</p> <p>7 BY MR. ZAID:</p> <p>8 Q. Now, when the tweet was made on April 8, 9 2022, do you have any recollection of whether you 10 were in the United States?</p> <p>11 A. In the United States on that day? I have 12 no idea.</p> <p>13 Q. Let me put it this way. Do you have any 14 recollection of whether you were in Germany at the 15 time?</p> <p>16 A. I'm quite positive I wasn't, unless I was 17 quickly transitioning through. But, no, I was not 18 living in Germany certainly, and I was not there.</p> <p>19 Q. And since you left as the ambassador, June 20 1st, 2020?</p> <p>21 A. Yeah.</p> <p>22 Q. Have you been back to Germany?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 64</p> <p>1 "Being a Nazi" -- in paragraph 19, "being a Nazi is a 2 serious crime. It is even a crime to openly 3 sympathize with Nazis or promote Nazi ideas." 4 Do you agree with that comment?</p> <p>5 A. Correct.</p> <p>6 Q. Now, at any time that you've gone over to 7 Germany, have you had any fear of prosecution?</p> <p>8 A. No, I've never associated with Nazis.</p> <p>9 Q. Are you aware of whether anyone in the 10 German press has indicated that you associate with 11 individuals that have Nazi philosophies?</p> <p>12 A. I don't.</p> <p>13 Q. Now, I presume you have no concern of any 14 type of arrest or prosecution here in the United 15 States with respect to any allegations that you 16 associate with Nazis?</p> <p>17 A. Correct, because it's not true.</p> <p>18 Q. Sorry, you can never find the darn article 19 you want when you're looking for it. 20 (Grenell Exhibit No. 7 was identified 21 for the record.) 22 BY MR. ZAID:</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 63</p> <p>1 A. Yeah, sure.</p> <p>2 Q. About how many times?</p> <p>3 A. I don't know. Probably too many to count.</p> <p>4 Q. Do you recall when your last trip was?</p> <p>5 A. Yeah, about a month ago.</p> <p>6 Q. Okay. In any of your trips to Germany, 7 has anyone referenced Ms. Troye's tweets, 8 specifically?</p> <p>9 A. Specifically, no.</p> <p>10 Q. On your trips to Germany, has anyone 11 referenced generally that individuals have identified 12 you as interacting with Nazis?</p> <p>13 A. The charge has been reported in German 14 papers.</p> <p>15 Q. About the tweet itself?</p> <p>16 A. About her accusation.</p> <p>17 Q. Do you know which newspapers?</p> <p>18 A. I can't recall.</p> <p>19 Q. Are these articles that you have?</p> <p>20 A. No. I think I've seen, but I don't have.</p> <p>21 Q. Now, you have mentioned, I believe in your 22 complaint and online -- no, in your complaint.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 65</p> <p>1 Q. I've had marked as Exhibit 7, an article 2 from The Jewish Voice from December 23, 2020 3 entitled, "Jewish Democratic Leader Smears Richard 4 Grenell as Nazi Supporter - Then Blocks Critics." Is 5 this an article that you ever recall seeing?</p> <p>6 A. Yeah, I think so. I don't recall it now, 7 but I think I recall it.</p> <p>8 Q. And Halie, H-A-L-I-E, Soifer or Soifer, 9 S-O-I-F-E-R, who is listed as the CEO of the Jewish 10 Democratic Council of America, is that someone you 11 have any knowledge of?</p> <p>12 A. I don't think so, I don't believe.</p> <p>13 Q. Are you familiar with the organization, 14 the Jewish Democratic Council of America?</p> <p>15 A. No, never heard of them.</p> <p>16 Q. According to the article, she claimed that 17 you had, in quotes, "emboldened actual neo-Nazis," 18 end quote. And as the article says, met with 19 criticism for doing so. 20 Do you have any knowledge of her making 21 that comment about you? 22 A. No, but it stems from the Breitbart</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 126</p> <p>1 Q. And in fact, you did tweet on June 26, you</p> <p>2 also said that -- to him, you are an apologist for</p> <p>3 pedophilia and child abuse. What is your basis for</p> <p>4 that?</p> <p>5 A. His legislation that he pushes to make</p> <p>6 man-boy love acceptable. I hope you don't agree with</p> <p>7 that. I think it's terrible. And to have a sitting</p> <p>8 Senator want to have the age of consent lowered, so</p> <p>9 that gay men can have sex with younger kids is pretty</p> <p>10 awful. And so when he attacks me, I'm really proud</p> <p>11 of it.</p> <p>12 Q. With respect to the impact of the</p> <p>13 statement in Ms. Troye's tweet, have you received any</p> <p>14 type of counseling for any emotional stress or</p> <p>15 damages that you suffered?</p> <p>16 A. No.</p> <p>17 Q. Are you on any medication as a result</p> <p>18 of --</p> <p>19 A. No.</p> <p>20 Q. Or impact from the tweet?</p> <p>21 A. Sorry, no.</p> <p>22 Q. The national political orgs that you work</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 128</p> <p>1 Q. And the work for the other group, the</p> <p>2 non-radio, what type of work would specifically be</p> <p>3 involved with that?</p> <p>4 A. Oh, sorry, that's what I was asking --</p> <p>5 answering. The general board members, fund-raising</p> <p>6 advice. You know, just all sorts of stuff like that.</p> <p>7 Just to be clear, the one that I was talking about</p> <p>8 with radio, I don't give PR advice or do the general</p> <p>9 consulting or money raising, or things like that.</p> <p>10 Q. Those are political interviews?</p> <p>11 A. Yeah.</p> <p>12 Q. Type interviews?</p> <p>13 A. Correct. Pretty exclusively foreign</p> <p>14 policy.</p> <p>15 Q. Now, you were part of the -- you were part</p> <p>16 of the effort to challenge the election of 2020 in</p> <p>17 the State of Nevada at least; is that correct?</p> <p>18 A. Yeah. The way I would characterize it is,</p> <p>19 we exercised our constitutional right to get to the</p> <p>20 bottom of why certain things were happening that</p> <p>21 looked, you know, particularly bad.</p> <p>22 Q. Now, based on the efforts that you and</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 127</p> <p>1 for, what, if you can describe, is covered by the</p> <p>2 NDA?</p> <p>3 A. Just not to disclose the fact that I have</p> <p>4 a contract with them.</p> <p>5 Q. Okay. Can you describe the type of work</p> <p>6 that you do for them without identifying who they</p> <p>7 are?</p> <p>8 A. Sure. One, radio interviews. And two is</p> <p>9 a generic advising, helping raise money where</p> <p>10 possible. You know, giving advice, in general.</p> <p>11 Q. That was --</p> <p>12 A. To board members type of stuff.</p> <p>13 Q. Sorry. Interviews that you conduct or to</p> <p>14 help arrange for interviews of others?</p> <p>15 A. No, no, sorry. No, that I do. I do</p> <p>16 multiple times a week.</p> <p>17 Q. That you interview?</p> <p>18 A. On average.</p> <p>19 Q. You're being interviewed or you interview</p> <p>20 someone?</p> <p>21 A. I'm being interviewed about foreign policy</p> <p>22 issues. Public, it's all public.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 129</p> <p>1 others, to your knowledge, that were engaged in to</p> <p>2 challenge, were any of them successful?</p> <p>3 A. No, specifically in Nevada, we weren't</p> <p>4 able to get to present our case, because we didn't</p> <p>5 have standing or a variety of different reasons.</p> <p>6 MR. BINNALL: Again, objection to</p> <p>7 relevancy on this line. Not reasonably calculated to</p> <p>8 result in admissible evidence.</p> <p>9 MR. ZAID: So I guess, Jesse, based on the</p> <p>10 conversations that you and Tom had with respect to</p> <p>11 the NDAs and any more details, our not asking further</p> <p>12 probing questions is not a waiver of that. We'll</p> <p>13 either revisit with you or submit other written</p> <p>14 discovery within, obviously, the time period.</p> <p>15 MR. BINNALL: We'll meet and confer on</p> <p>16 that.</p> <p>17 MR. ZAID: I have nothing further.</p> <p>18 MR. BINNALL: Can we just take a quick</p> <p>19 break? I don't think I'm going to have much, if any,</p> <p>20 redirect, but I just want to take a moment.</p> <p>21 MR. ZAID: Sure.</p> <p>22 THE VIDEOGRAPHER: Off the record at</p>

Exhibit H

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

RICHARD GRENELL,

Plaintiff,

v.

Case No. CL22001907

OLIVIA TROYE,

Defendant.

**PLAINTIFF GRENELL'S OBJECTIONS AND RESPONSE TO
DEFENDANT TROYE'S FIRST SET OF REQUESTS FOR DOCUMENTS**

Plaintiff Richard Grenell, by counsel, states the following for his objections and answers to Defendant Olivia Troye's First Set of Requests for Documents.

DEFINITIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS

Plaintiff Grenell objects to the definitions of "All documents" and "Identify" to the extent that they are overly broad and unduly burdensome, and create new and separate interrogatories for any request that requires identification.

DOCUMENT REQUESTS

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 1: Any and all documents that prove any financial loss suffered by Plaintiff as a result of Defendant's tweet.

RESPONSE: Any responsive documents will be produced.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 2: Any and all documents pertaining to Plaintiff's association with the AfD.

OBJECTION: Mr. Grenell objects to this Request as irrelevant and not reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence. Mr. Grenell further objects to this Request as vague, as it is unclear what is meant by "association."

RESPONSE: Without waiving objections, Mr. Grenell responds as follows:
None.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 3: Any and all documents concerning the Defendant.

OBJECTION: Mr. Grenell objects to this Request to the extent that it is ambiguous, overly broad, and not reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence.

RESPONSE: Without waiving objections, please see GRENELL 1–6.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 4: Any and all documents sent to or received from Arthur Schwartz pertaining to Defendant and/or her legal counsel.

OBJECTION: Mr. Grenell objects to this Request as irrelevant and not reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence.

RESPONSE: Without waiving objections, Mr. Grenell responds as follows:
None.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 5: Any and all documents reflecting how Defendant's "accusation was picked up by the media and repeated without criticism or question."

RESPONSE: See GRENELL 7–14.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 6: Any and all documents concerning Plaintiff's known, suspected or alleged association or ties to Nationalists, White Nationalists, White Supremacists and/or Nazis.

OBJECTION: Mr. Grenell objects to this Request as overly broad, irrelevant and not reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence. Additionally, the Request is vague and ambiguous.

RESPONSE: Without waiving objections, Mr. Grenell responds as follows: Other than Defendant's defamatory tweets at issue in this lawsuit, and the media reporting on them, none.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 7: Any and all documents sent to or received from Kash Patel pertaining to Defendant and/or her legal counsel.

OBJECTION: Mr. Grenell objects to this Request as irrelevant and not reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence.

RESPONSE: Without waiving objections, Mr. Grenell responds as follows: None.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 8: Any and all documents pertaining to Vice President Mike Pence's visit to Germany while the Plaintiff was serving as U.S. Ambassador.

RESPONSE: None.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 9: Any and all documents pertaining to Plaintiff's communication with the AfD or its representatives.

OBJECTION: Mr. Grenell objects to this Request as irrelevant and not reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of admissible evidence. Mr. Grenell further objects to this Request as overly broad and unduly burdensome.

RESPONSE: Without waiving objections, Mr. Grenell responds as follows: none.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 10: Any and all documents relied upon by the Plaintiff in support of his claims in this litigation.

OBJECTION: Mr. Grenell objects to this request to the extent that this request seeks documents protected by the attorney-client privilege or the work product doctrine.

RESPONSE: Without waiving objections, please see GRENELL 1–14.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 11: Any and all documents that assisted or relate to the preparation of Plaintiff's answers to the Defendant's First Set of Interrogatories.

OBJECTION: Mr. Grenell objects to this request to the extent that this request seeks documents protected by the attorney-client privilege or the work product doctrine.

RESPONSE: Without waiving objections, please see GRENELL 1–14.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 12: Any and all documents the Plaintiff intends to offer in evidence at the trial of this matter.

OBJECTION: Mr. Grenell objects to this request as it seeks attorney work product and mental impressions of counsel. Mr. Grenell will provide trial exhibits in compliance with the Scheduling Order.

REQUEST FOR PRODUCTION NO. 13: Any and all reports by all experts you have retained to provide testimony in this case, including (a) a complete statement of all opinions the expert will express, and the basis and reasons for the opinions; (b) the data or other information considered by the expert in forming his or her opinion; (c) any exhibits that will be used to summarize or support the expert's opinion; (d) the expert's qualifications, including his or her curriculum vitae, and a list of all publications authored by the expert in the previous ten (10) years; (e) a list of all other cases in which, during the previous four (4) years, the expert has testified as an expert

at trial or by depositions; (f) all drafts and revisions of any report prepared, reviewed, or relied on by each expert; and (g) all documents, including correspondence, exchanged between the expert and your attorneys.

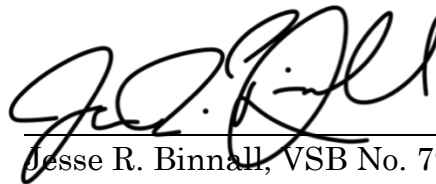
OBJECTION: Mr. Grenell objects to this request to the extent that it seeks documents protected by the attorney-client privilege or the work product doctrine and. In addition, Mr. Grenell objects to this request as compound and burdensome and seeks information outside of the scope of allowable discovery pursuant to Rule 4:1(b)(4)(A).

RESPONSE: Without waiving objections, Mr. Grenell responds as follows: No decision regarding expert witnesses has been made.

Dated: March 8, 2023

RICHARD GRENELL
By Counsel

BINNALL LAW GROUP, PLLC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jesse R. Binnall", is written over a horizontal line.

Jesse R. Binnall, VSB No. 79292
Jason C. Greaves, VSB No. 86164
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Counsel for Plaintiff

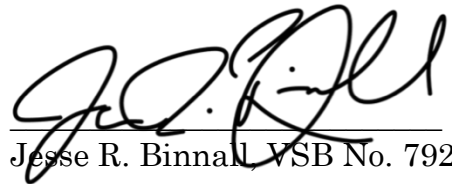
CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on March 8, 2023, a true and correct copy of the foregoing
was served by U.S. First Class mail and electronic mail, to:

Thomas M. Craig
FH+H
1751 Pinnacle Drive, Ste. 1000
Tysons, Virginia 22102

Mark S. Zaid
Mark S. Zaid, P.C.
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Mark@MarkZaid.com

Counsel for Defendant



Jesse R. Binnall VSB No. 79292

Counsel for Plaintiff

Exhibit I

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

RICHARD GRENELL

Plaintiff,

v.

OLIVIA TROYE

Defendant.

CASE NO.: CL 22-001907

**DEFENDANT OLIVIA TROYE’S SECOND REVISED RESPONSES AND
OBJECTIONS TO PLAINTIFF RICHARD GRENELL’S FIRST INTERROGATORIES**

Defendant Olivia Troye, pursuant to Rules 4:1 and 4:8 of the Rules of the Supreme Court of Virginia, hereby supplements and objects to the following Interrogatories:

Interrogatories

3. Identify each person whom you know or believe has personal knowledge of the facts related to the allegations in the complaint and any answer you have filed or may file to the complaint, or likely to have discoverable information, including in such description his or her most recent contact information and a brief description of the facts about which you believe each has knowledge or discoverable information. This request includes, but is not limited to, every person you may call as a witness or depose in this matter. It also includes all individuals who you know have information or knowledge that is unfavorable to your case. Include the full name, address, email address, and telephone number of each person identified.

OBJECTION: Defendant objects to this instruction to the extent it seeks to enlarge Defendant’s obligations under a future scheduling order and will comply with the scheduling order deadline for producing any such information if such an order is entered. Defendant can only identify some, not “all individuals who [...] have information or knowledge that is unfavorable to your case.” The request that she identify “all” the people who she understands to have personal

knowledge is overly broad, and further, she objects as she may or may not have the contact information for such people. This interrogatory is unduly burdensome since it seeks a nearly unlimited category of people, and their contact information, and calls for the mental impressions of counsel concerning what constitutes “knowledge or discoverable information” which is inherently subjective. This request is overly broad on its face and unreasonably increases the costs of litigation in this matter in light of the issues involved in the case.

RESPONSE: Without waiving the above objections, the Defendant states: On July 26, 2023, I was having a telephone conversation with Brian Murphy (murphyfed@hotmail.com/703-712-3914) when he provided unsolicited information regarding his knowledge of the facts related to this lawsuit. He provided details in writing that characterized a conversation he had with Stephanie Dobitsch as follows:

In the late winter of 2020, I was the Principle Deputy Undersecretary for the Office of Intelligence and Assessments at the Department of Homeland Security. After I completed a meeting at the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, I returned to the DHS office. Rick Grenell had been recently installed into the position as the Acting Director of National Intelligence. The meeting I attended was broadly attended with multiple agencies participating. Upon my return to the office, I met with Stephanie Dobitsch. Ms. Dobitsch was one of the senior managers who worked for me at DHS. I spoke with her on a near-daily basis. During my conversation, I advised her Grenell was the new Acting DNI. Ms. Dobitsch advised that she had previously met with Grenell and explained that when she was serving in Vice President Mike Pence’s office she had been dispatched to Germany for temporary duty. She traveled to Germany to conduct advanced coordination prior to an upcoming Vice President Pence visit. Ms. Dobitsch advised that in Germany she met with U.S. Embassy personnel as well as German partners. During one of the

advance meetings, Grenell advised Ms. Dobitsch and others that the Vice President should meet with a German civil society group. Ms. Dobitsch had not heard of the group and conducted some preliminary research. She later traveled to the group's office and met with several of the members. Ms. Dobitsch advised that based on the information she had found, and through her experience with the group, she believed the group Grenell suggested was a far-right extremist group. In fact, Ms. Dobitsch claimed the group was similar to a neo-Nazi organization. She advised she told Vice President Pence's office that meeting with the group Grenell suggested would be a political disaster for the Vice President. Because of her recommendation, Vice President Pence did not meet with the group Grenell had suggested.

Gabrielle Cowan - CowanLG@state.gov; gabriellecowan@hotmail.com

Ward Dirksen - Ward_F._Dirksen@ovp.eop.gov

Stephanie Dobitsch - stephanie.dobitsch@hq.dhs.gov; (570) 352-6857

Nicholas Snyder - ncsnyder@gmail.com; (202) 285-1882

Chesley Dycus – none

I am not aware at this present time of any other contact information for these individuals.

4. Identify each person with whom you have communicated concerning the facts related to the allegations in the complaint and your answer, including in such description his or her most recent contact information and the date, type (i.e., but not limited to, telephone call, voicemail, email, text messaging, Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, Signal, Wickr, Telegram), and substance of the communication.

OBJECTION: Defendant objects to this interrogatory because is not reasonably calculated to seek admissible or relevant evidence and seeks information which could be privileged or otherwise protected from disclosure. Furthermore, this interrogatory seeks a potentially broad

category of documents and information, and appears designed to increase the costs of litigation by identifying all people with whom the Defendant has communicated about the case and a description of that communication. Requiring the Defendant to identify every person she ever “communicated concerning the facts related to the allegations in the complaint” and other pleadings is unreasonably broad and goes well beyond the permitted scope of discovery. This interrogatory is especially burdensome in light of the duty to supplement, and the ambiguity of the term “facts concerning facts related to the allegations in the complaint.” Defendant objects to this interrogatory because it seeks information which would be unduly burdensome or expensive to produce, considering the needs of the case, the amount in controversy, the limitations on the parties’ resources, and the importance of the issues at stake in the litigation. Furthermore, Defendant objects to this interrogatory as not being reasonable in temporal scope and in light of the duty to supplement could come to encompass describing communications with a significant number of people who are unrelated to this case. By seeking the identification of “each person” the Defendant has communicated to about the matters identified, it is overly broad, and appears designed to needlessly increase the costs of litigation. Defendant objects to this interrogatory to the extent it seeks to enlarge Defendant’s obligations under a future scheduling order and will comply with the scheduling order deadline for producing any such information required by that order if such an order is entered. In particular the Defendant will produce her witness list as required in accordance with the scheduling order entered by the court in this matter but rejects the Plaintiff’s attempt to broaden her obligations under the rules and will not be provided details of her communications as it would be impossible for her to reasonably do so.

RESPONSE: Without waiving the above objections, I refer you back to my response to Interrogatory No. 3, and the production of documents.

5. Identify each person you have spoken or written to about Richard Grenell since January 1, 2020.

OBJECTION: Defendant objects to this interrogatory because is not reasonably calculated to seek admissible or relevant evidence and seeks information for a nearly two-year period without any obvious relevance to the allegations in the complaint. Requiring the Defendant to identify every person she ever “spoken or written to” about the Plaintiff is unreasonably broad and goes well beyond the permitted scope of discovery. Defendant objects to this interrogatory because it seeks information which would be unduly burdensome or expensive to produce, considering the needs of the case, the amount in controversy, the limitations on the parties’ resources, and the importance of the issues at stake in the litigation. Furthermore, Defendant objects to this interrogatory as not being reasonable in temporal scope or limited to the subject matter of the litigation itself. By seeking the identification of “each person” the Defendant has communicated to about the Plaintiff, it is overly broad, and appears designed to needlessly increase the costs of litigation.

Without waiving the above objections, I refer you back to my response to Interrogatory No. 3.

6. Identify all documents, electronically stored information, and tangible things you are aware of that are relevant to this litigation, including the document type, date, author, and current location/custodian. Your response should include identification of all electronic devices holding electronically stored information (including emails, text messages, and other electronic messages) and the location of each such electronic device.

OBJECTION: Defendant objects to this interrogatory because is not reasonably calculated to seek admissible or relevant evidence and seeks information for all electronic devices without

adequate limitation as to time or scope, irrespective of relevance to the allegations in the complaint or issues in this litigation. Requiring the Defendant to identify every device which could contain information “relevant to this litigation” is unreasonably broad and goes well beyond the permitted scope of discovery. To the degree it calls for the mental impressions of counsel to conduct a determination as to what is “relevant” and what is not, this interrogatory is improper. In addition, the Defendant objects to this interrogatory because it seeks information about all documents (“the document type, date, author, and current location/custodian”) which would be unduly burdensome or expensive to produce, considering the needs of the case, the amount in controversy, the limitations on the parties’ resources, and the importance of the issues at stake in the litigation. Furthermore, the Defendant objects to this interrogatory as not being reasonable in temporal scope or limited to the subject matter of the litigation itself, aside from “relevant to this litigation” which is both vague and broad. Defendant declines to provide information protected by the attorney client privilege or the attorney work product doctrine.

By seeking the identification of “all documents” and every electronic device which could contain documents, this interrogatory is overly broad, and appears designed to needlessly increase the costs of litigation. Defendant objects to this interrogatory to the extent it seeks to enlarge Defendant’s obligations under a future scheduling order and will comply with the scheduling order deadline for producing required information if such an order is entered. In particular the Defendant will produce her exhibit list as required and in accordance with the scheduling order entered by the court in this matter. Further, the Defendant objects to any attempt to require her to discover, obtain or produce or describe any documents or devices outside of her reasonable custody or control, which may be in the custody of third parties.

RESPONSE: Without waiving the above objections, I refer you to the documents I produced as part of my response to Plaintiff's Second Production of Documents containing certain materials responsive to this interrogatory.

7. Describe and give the content of any statement, verbal or written, made by Richard Grenell, related either directly or indirectly, to the allegations that he hung out with or associated with Nazis or attempted to get Vice President Pence to attend a white supremacist gathering.

OBJECTION: Defendant objects to this interrogatory because is not reasonably calculated to seek admissible or relevant evidence and seeks information well outside the scope of appropriate discovery. Requiring the Defendant to respond to this interrogatory would be unduly burdensome or expensive, considering the needs of the case, the amount in controversy, the limitations on the parties' resources, and the importance of the issues at stake in the litigation. Furthermore, the Defendant objects to this interrogatory as not being reasonable in temporal scope.

By seeking the identification of "the content of any statement, verbal or written" this interrogatory is overly broad, and appears designed to needlessly increase the costs of litigation, especially in light of the single publication rule and the applicable statute of limitations. Furthermore, this interrogatory misstates the allegations in the complaint and mischaracterizes the Defendant's actions or statements concerning the Plaintiff and is therefore improper.

Without waiving the above objections, I refer you back to my response to Interrogatory No. 3.

Dated: August 2, 2023

Respectfully submitted,



Thomas M. Craig, VSB No. 68063

Fluet

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Counsel for Defendant

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on August 2, 2023, a true and correct copy of the foregoing Opposition to the Plaintiff's Motion for a Protective Order was served via email, facsimile, and U.S. Mail to the following attorneys of record:

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Jason Greaves, Esq.
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jason@binnall.com

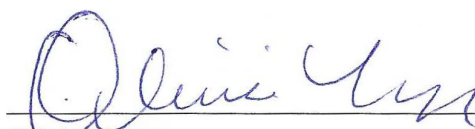


Thomas M. Craig, Esq.

Declaration as to Interrogatory Answers

Defendant Olivia Troye, hereby states:

1. That I, Olivia Troye, answered the Interrogatory identified above.
2. As of August 2, 2023, the response provided are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.



Olivia Troye

VIRGINIA:

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

RICHARD GRENELL

Plaintiff,

v.

OLIVIA TROYE

Defendant.

CASE NO.: CL 22-001907

ORDER

UPON CONSIDERATION of Defendant Olivia Troye's Plea in Bar to the Plaintiff's Complaint for Defamation and oral arguments, it is:

ORDERED that Defendant's Plea in Bar is **GRANTED**;

FURTHER ORDERED that this action is hereby dismissed with prejudice;

FURTHER ORDERED that the Clerk of the Court shall send a copy of this Order to all counsel of record.

THIS MATTER IS ENDED.

Entered this _____ day of _____, 2023.

Alexandria City Circuit Court Judge


BT
DEPUTY CLERK

REG PARKS, CLERK

2023 OCT -6 PM 3:05

CLERK OF COURTS
CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

I ask for this:


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